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HISTORY

OF

ROMAN LITERATURE,

FROM

ITS EARLIEST PERIOD

TO

THE AUGUSTAN AGE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

BY

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FROM THE LAST LONDON EDITION.

VOL. I.

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PREFACE.

There are few subjects on which a greater number of laborious volumes have been compiled, than the History and Antiquities of Rome. Everything connected with its foreign policy and civil constitution, or even with the domestic manners of its citizens, has been profoundly and accurately investigated. The mysterious origin of Rome, veiled in the wonders of mythological fable—the stupendous increase of its power, rendered yet more gigantic by the mists of antiquity—its undaunted heroes, who seem to us like the genii of some greater world—its wide dominion, extended over the whole civilized globe—and, finally, its portentous fall, which forms, as it were, the separation between ancient and modern times, have rendered its civil and military history a subject of prevailing interest to all enlightened nations. But, while its warlike exploits, and the principles of its political institutions, have been repeatedly and laboriously investigated, less

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attention, perhaps, has been paid to the history of its literature, than to that of any other country, possessed of equal pretensions to learning and refinement; and, in the English language at least, no connected view of its Rise, its Progress, and Decline, has been as yet presented to us. When the battles of Rome have been accurately described, and all her political intrigues minutely developed—when so much inquiry and thought have been bestowed, not only on the wars, conquests, and civil institutions of the Romans, but on their most trivial customs, it is wonderful that so little has been done to exhibit the intellectual exertions of the fancy and the reason, of their most refined and exalted spirits.

It cannot, indeed, be denied, that the civil history of Rome, and her military operations, present our species in a lofty aspect of power, magnanimity, and courage—that they exhibit the widest range and utmost extent of the human powers in enterprize and resources—and that statesmen or philosophers may derive from them topics to illustrate almost every political speculation. Yet, however vast and instructive may be the page which unfolds the eventful history of the foreign hostilities and internal commotions of the Roman people, it can hardly be more interesting than the analogies between their literary attainments and the other circumstances of their condition;—the peculiarities of their literature, its peculiar origination, and the peculiar effects which it produced. The literature of a people may indeed, in one sense, be regarded as the most attractive feature of its history. It is at once the effect of leisure and refinement, and the means of increasing and perpetuating the civilization from which it springs. Literature, as a late writer has

[pg v] powerfully and eloquently demonstrated, possesses an extensive moral agency, and a close connection with glory, liberty, and happiness[1]; and hence the *history* of literature becomes associated with all that concerns the fame, the freedom, and the felicity of nations. “There is no part of history,” says Dr Johnson, “so generally useful, as that which relates the progress of the human mind—the gradual improvement of reason—the successive advances of science—the vicissitudes of learning and ignorance, which are the light and darkness of thinking beings—the extinction and resuscitation of arts, and the revolutions of the intellectual world. If accounts of battles and invasions are peculiarly the business of princes, the useful or elegant arts are not to be neglected[2].” If, then, in the literary history of Rome, we do not meet with those dazzling events, and stupendous results, which, from their lustre and magnitude, still seem, as it were, placed at the summit of human affairs, we shall find in it more intelligence and order, in consequence of its progress being less dependent on passion and interest. The trophies, too, of the most absolute power, and the most unlimited empire, seem destined, as if by a moral necessity, to pass away: But the dominion which the writers of Rome exercise over the human mind, will last as long as the world, or at least as long as its civilization—

> “Alas, for Tully’s voice, and Virgil’s lay,
> And Livy’s pictured page!—But these shall be
> Her resurrection; all beside—decay[3].”

There are chiefly two points of view, in which literary history may be regarded as of high utility
[pg vi] and importance. The *first* is the consideration of the powerful effect of literature on the manners and habits of the people among whom it flourishes. It is noble, indeed, in itself, and its productions are glorious, without any relative considerations. An ingenious literary performance has its intrinsic merits, and would delight an enthusiastic scholar, or contemplative philosopher, in perfect solitude, even though he himself were the only reader, and the work the production of a Being of a different order from himself. But what renders literature chiefly interesting, is the influence which it exercises on the dignity and happiness of human nature, by improving the character, and enlarging the capacity, of our species. A stream, however grand or beautiful in itself, derives its chief interest from a consideration of its influence on the landscape it adorns; and, in this point of view, literature has been well likened to “a noble lake or majestic river, which imposes on the imagination by every impression of dignity and sublimity. But it is the moisture that insensibly arises from them, which, gradually mingling with the soil, nourishes all the luxuriance of vegetation, and fructifies and adorns the surface of the earth[4].”

Literature, however, has not in all ages denoted, with equal accuracy, the condition of mankind, or been equally efficacious in impelling their progress, and contributing to their improvement. In the ancient empires of the East, where monarchies were despotic, and priests the only scholars, learning was regarded by those who were possessed of it rather as a means of confirming an ascendancy over the vulgar, than of improving their condition; and they were more desirous to
[pg vii] perpetuate the subjection, than contribute to the melioration of mankind. Accordingly, almost every trace of this confined and perverted learning has vanished from the world. In the freer states of antiquity, as the republics of Greece and Rome, letters found various outlets, by which their improving influence was imparted, more or less extensively, to the bulk of the citizens. Dramatic representations were among the most favourite amusements, and oratorical displays excited among all classes the most lively interest. Such public exhibitions established points of contact, from which light was elicited. The mind of the multitude was enriched by the contemplation of superior intellect, and mankind were, to a certain extent, united by the reception of similar impressions, and the excitement of similar emotions.

Still, however, the history of any part of ancient literature is, in respect of its influence on the condition of states, far less important than that of modern nations. From the high price and scarcity of books, a restriction was imposed on the diffusion of knowledge. “A bulwark existed between the body of mankind and the reflecting few. They were distinct nations inhabiting the same country; and the opinions of the one, speaking comparatively with modern times, had little influence on the other[5].” The learned, in those days, wrote only or chiefly for the learned and the great. They neither expected nor cultivated the approbation of the mass of mankind. An extensive and noisy celebrity was interdicted. It was only with the more estimable part of his species that the author was united by that sympathy which we term the Love of Fame. He was the head, not
[pg viii] of a numerous, but of a select community. By nothing short of the highest excellence could he hope for the approbation of judges so skilful, or expect an immortality so difficult to be preserved. While this may, perhaps, have contributed to the polish and perfection of literary works, it is obvious that the general influence of letters must have been less humanizing, and must have had less tendency to unite and assimilate mankind. Even philosophers, whose peculiar business was the instruction of their species, had no mode of disseminating or perpetuating their opinions, except by the formation of sects and schools, which created for the masters, pupils who were the followers of his creed, and the depositaries of his claims to immortality.

It is the invention of the art of printing which has at length secured the widest diffusion, and an unlimited endurance, to learning and civilization. As a stone thrown into the sea agitates (it has been said) more or less every drop in the expanse of ocean, so every thought that is now cast into the fluctuating but ceaseless tide of letters, will more or less affect the human mind, and influence the human condition, throughout all the habitable globe, and “to the last syllable of time.”

It is this, and not the height to which individual genius has soared, that forms the grand distinction between ancient and modern literature. The triumph of modern literature consists not in the point of elevation to which it has attained, but in the extent of its conquests—the extent to which it has refined and quickened the mass of mankind. It would be difficult to adjust the intellectual precedence of Newton and Archimedes—of Bacon and Aristotle—of Shakspeare and Homer—of Thucydides and Hume: But it may be declared with certainty, that the people of
[pg ix] modern nations, in consequence of literature being more widely diffused, have become more civilized and enlightened. The Indus and Oronoko, rolling amid woods and deserts their waste of waters, may seem superior to the Thames in the view of the mere admirer of the grandeur and magnificence of nature; but how inferior are they in the eye of the philosopher and historian!

With regard to the Romans, in particular, they are allowed to have been a civilized nation, powerfully constituted, and wisely governed, previous to the existence of any author in the Latin language. Their character was formed before their literature was created: their moral and patriotic dignity, indeed, had reached its highest perfection, in the age in which their literature commenced—the age of Lælius and Africanus. Except in the province of the drama, it always continued a patrician attribute; and though intellectual improvement could not have facilitated the inroads of vice and guilty ambition, it certainly proved inadequate to stem the tide of moral corruption, to mitigate the sanguinary animosities of faction, or to retard the establishment of despotism.

Literary history is, *secondly*, of importance, as being the index of the character and condition of a people—as holding up a mirror, which reflects the manners and customs of remote or ancient nations. The less influence, however, which literature exercises, the less valuable will be its picture of life and manners. It must also be admitted, that from a separate cause, the early periods, at least, of Roman literature, possess not in this point of view any peculiar attractions. When literature is indigenous, as it was in Greece, where authors were guided by no antecedent
[pg x] system, and their compositions were shaped on no other model than the objects themselves which they were occupied in delineating, or the living passions they portrayed, an accurate estimate of the general state of manners and feeling may be drawn from works written at various epochs of the national history. But, at Rome, the pursuit of literature was neither a native nor predominant taste among the people. The Roman territory was always a foreign soil for letters, which were not the produce of national genius, but were naturalized by the assiduous culture of a few individuals reared in the schools of Greece. Indeed, the early Roman authors, particularly the dramatic, who, of all others, best illustrate the prevalent ideas and sentiments of a nation, were mere translators from the Greek. Hence, those delineations, which at first view might appear to be characteristic national sketches, are in fact the draught of foreign manners, and the mirror of customs which no Roman adopted, or of sentiments in which, perhaps, no Roman participated.

Since, then, the literature of Rome exercised but a limited influence on the conduct of its citizens, and as it reciprocally reflects but a partial light on their manners and institutions, its history must, in a great measure, consist of biographical sketches of *authors*—of critical accounts of their *works*—and an examination of the *influence* which these works have exercised on modern literature. The *authors* of Rome were, in their characters, and the events of their lives, more interesting than the writers of any ancient or modern land. The authors who flourished during the existence of the Roman Republic, were Cato the Censor, Cicero, and Cæsar; men who (independently of their literary claims to celebrity) were unrivalled in their own age and country,
[pg xi] and have scarcely been surpassed in any other. I need not here anticipate those observations which the *works* of the Roman authors will suggest in the following pages. Though formed on a model which has been shaped by the Greeks, we shall perceive through that spirit of imitation which marks all their literary productions, a tone of practical utility, derived from the familiar acquaintance which their writers exercised with the business and affairs of life; and also that air of nationality, which was acquired from the greatness and unity of the Roman republic, and could not be expected in literary works, produced where there was a subdivision of states in the same country, as in Greece, modern Italy, Germany, and Britain. We shall remark a characteristic authority of expression, a gravity, circumspection, solidity of understanding, and dignity of sentiment, produced partly by the moral firmness that distinguished the character of the Romans, their austerity of manners, and tranquillity of temper, but chiefly by their national pride, and the exalted name of Roman citizen, which their authors bore. And, finally, we shall recognise that love of rural retirement which originated in the mode of life of the ancient Italians, and was augmented by the pleasing contrast which the undisturbed repose and simple enjoyments of rural existence presented to the bustle of an immense and agitated capital. In the last point of view that has been alluded to—the *influence* which these works have exercised on modern letters—it cannot be denied that the literary history of Rome is peculiarly interesting. If the Greeks gave the first impulse to literature, the Romans engraved the traces of its progress deeper on the world. “The earliest writers,” as has been justly remarked, “took possession of the most striking objects
[pg xii] for description, and the most probable occurrences for fiction, and left nothing to those that followed, but transcriptions of the same events, and new combinations of the same images[6].” The great author from whom these reflections are quoted, had at one time actually “projected a work, to show how small a quantity of invention there is in the world, and that the same images and incidents, with little variation, have served all the authors who have ever written[7].” Had he prosecuted his intention, he would have found the notion he entertained fully confirmed by the history both of dramatic and romantic fiction; he would have perceived the incapacity of the most active and fertile imagination greatly to diversify the common characters and incidents of life, which, on a superficial view, one might suppose to be susceptible of infinite combinations; he

would have found, that while Plautus and Terence servilely copied from the Greek dramatists, even Ariosto scarcely diverged in his comedies from the paths of Plautus.

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But whatever may be the advantages or imperfections of a literary subject in its own nature, it is evident that it can never be treated with effect or utility, unless sufficient materials exist for compilation. Unfortunately, there was no historian of Roman literature among the Romans themselves. Many particulars, however, with regard to it, as also judgments on productions which are now lost, may be collected from the writings of Cicero; and many curious remarks, as well as amusing anecdotes, may be gathered from the works of the latter Classics; as Pliny's *Natural History*, the *Institutes* of Quintilian, the *Attic Nights* of Aulus Gellius, and the *Saturnalia* of Macrobius.

[pg xiii] Among modern authors who have written on the subject of Roman literature, the first place is unquestionably due to Tiraboschi, who, though a cold and uninteresting critic, is distinguished by soundness of judgment and labour of research. The first and second volumes of his great work, *Della Letteratura Italiana*, are occupied with the subject of Roman literature; and though not executed with the same ability as the portion of his literary history relating to modern Italy, they may safely be relied on for correctness of facts and references.

The recent French work of Schoell, entitled, *Histoire Abregée de la Litterature Romaine*, is extremely succinct and unsatisfactory on the early periods of Roman literature. Though consisting of four volumes, the author, at the middle of the first volume of the book, has advanced as far as Virgil. It is more complete in the succeeding periods, and, like his *Histoire de la Litterature Grecque*, is rather a history of the decline, than of the progress and perfection of literature.

A number of German works, (chiefly, however, bibliographical,) have lately appeared on the subject of Roman literature. I regret, that from possessing but a recent and limited acquaintance with the language, I have not been able to draw so extensively as might have been wished from these sources of information.

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The composition of the present volumes was not suggested by any of the works which I have mentioned on the subject of Roman literature; but by the perusal of an elegant, though somewhat superficial production, on "The Civil and Constitutional History of Rome, from its Foundation to
[pg xiv] the Age of Augustus[8]." It occurred to me that a History of Roman *Literature*, during the same period, might prove not uninteresting. There are three great ages in the literary history of Rome —that which precedes the æra of Augustus—the epoch which is stamped with the name of that emperor—and the interval which commenced immediately after his death, and may be considered as extending to the destruction of Rome. Of these periods, the first and second run into each other with respect to dates, but the difference in their spirit and taste may be easily distinguished. Although Cicero died during the triumvirate of Octavius, his genius breathes only the spirit of the Republic; and though Virgil and Horace were born during the subsistence of the commonwealth, their writings bear the character of monarchical influence.

The ensuing volumes include only the first of these successive periods. Whether I shall hereafter proceed to investigate the history of the others, will depend on the reception which the present effort may obtain, and on other circumstances which I am equally unable to anticipate.

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Meanwhile, I have made considerable alterations, and, I trust, improvements, in the present edition. These, however, are so much interwoven with the body of the work, that they cannot be
[pg xv] specified—except some additional Translations from the Fragments of the older Latin poets—a Dissertation on the *Tachygraphy*, or short-hand writing of the Romans, introduced at the commencement of the Appendix—and a Critical Account of Cicero's Dialogue *De Republica*, which, though discovered, had not issued from the press when the former edition was published.

HISTORY

OF

ROMAN LITERATURE, &c.

"Parva quoque, ut ferme principia omnia, et ea ipsa peregrina res fuit."
LIVY, lib. vii. c. 2.

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HISTORY

OF

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In tracing the Literary History of a people, it is important not only to ascertain whence their first rudiments of knowledge were derived, but even to fix the origin of those tribes, whose cultivation, being superior to their own, acted as an incentive to literary exertion. The privilege, however, assumed by national vanity, *miscendi humana divinis*, has enveloped the antiquities of almost every country in darkness and mystery: But there is no race whose early history is involved in greater obscurity and contradiction than the first inhabitants of those Italian states, which finally formed component parts of the Roman republic. The origin of the five Saturnian, and twelve Etruscan cities, is lost in the mist of ages; and we may as well hope to obtain credible information concerning the monuments of Egypt or India, as to investigate their inscrutable antiquities. At the period when light is first thrown, by authentic documents, on the condition of Italy, we find it occupied by various tribes, which had reached different degrees of civilization, which spoke different dialects, and disputed with each other the property of the lands whence they drew their subsistence. All before that time is founded on poetical embellishment, the speculations of theorists, or national vanity arrogating to itself a Trojan, a Grecian, or even a divine original.

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The happy situation of Italy, imbosomed in a sea, which washed not only the coast of all the south of Europe, but likewise the shores of Africa and Asia, afforded facilities for communication and commerce with almost every part of the ancient world. It is probable, that a country gifted like this peninsula, with a fertile soil, incomparable climate, and unusual charms of scenery, attracted the attention of its neighbours, and sometimes allured them from less favoured settlements. "Il semble," says a recent French writer, "que les Dieux aient lancé l'Italie au milieu du vaste océan comme un Phare immense qui appelle les navigateurs des pays les plus eloignés"[9]. The customs, and even names, which were prevalent in Egypt, Phœnicia, and Greece, were thus introduced into Italy, and formed materials from which the framers of systems have constructed theories concerning its first colonization by the Egyptians, the Pelasgi, or whatever nation they chose. There is scarcely, however, an ancient history or document entitled to credit, and recording the arrival of a colony in Italy, which does not also mention that the new-comers found prior tribes, with whom they waged war, or intermixed.

The ample lakes and lofty mountains, by which Italy is intersected, naturally divided its inhabitants into separate and independent nations. Of these by far the most celebrated were the Etruscans. The origin of this remarkable people, called Tyrrhenians by the Greeks, and Thusci, or Etrusci, by the Latins, has been a subject of endless controversy among antiquarians; and, indeed, had perplexed the ancients no less than it has puzzled the moderns. Herodotus, the

earliest authentic historian whose works are now extant, represents them as a colony of Lydians, who were themselves a tribe of the vagrant Pelasgi. In the reign of Atys, son of Menes, the Lydian nation being driven to extremity by famine, the king divided it into two portions, one of which was destined to remain in Asia, and the other to emigrate under the conduct of his son Tyrrhenus. The inhabitants who composed the latter division leaving their country, repaired to Smyrna, where they built vessels, and removed in search of new abodes. After touching on various shores, they penetrated into the heart of Italy, and at length settled in Umbria. There they constructed dwellings, and called themselves Tyrrhenians, from the name of their leader[10]. Some of the circumstances which Herodotus relates as having occurred previous to the emigration of the Lydian colony appear fabulous, as the invention of games, in order to appease the sensation of hunger, and the fasting every alternate day for a space of eighteen years; and it would, perhaps, be too much to assert, that before the Lydians, no other tribe had ever set foot in
[pg 21] Umbria or Etruria. But the account of the departure of the colony is itself plausible, and its truth appears to be corroborated, if not confirmed, by certain resemblances in the language, religion, and pastimes of the Lydians, and of the ancient Etruscans[11]. The manners, too, and customs of the Lydians, did not differ essentially from those of the Greeks; and the princes of Lydia, like the sovereigns of Persia, being accustomed to employ Phœnician or Egyptian sailors, the colony of Lydians, which settled in Italy, might thus contain a mixture of such people, and present those appearances which have led some antiquarians to consider the Etruscans as Phœnicians or Egyptians, while others have regarded them as Greeks. The writers of antiquity, though varying in particulars, have followed, in general, the tradition delivered by Herodotus concerning the descent of the Etruscans. Cicero, Strabo[12], Velleius Paterculus[13], Seneca, Pliny, Plutarch[14], and Servius, all affirm that they came from Lydia; and to these may be added Catullus, who calls the lake Benacus *Lydiæ lacus undæ*, obviously because he considered the ancient Etruscans, within whose extended territory it lay, as of Lydian origin. It is evident, too, that the Etruscans themselves believed that they had sprung from the Lydians, and that they inculcated this belief on others. Tacitus informs us, that, in the reign of Tiberius, a contest concerning their respective antiquity arose among eleven cities of Asia, which were heard by their deputies in presence of the Emperor. The Sardians rested their claims on an alleged affinity to the Etruscans, and, in support of their pretensions, produced an ancient decree, in which that people declared themselves descended from the followers of Tyrrhenus, who had left their native country of Lydia, and founded new settlements in Italy[15].

Hellanicus of Lesbos, a Greek historian, nearly contemporary with Herodotus, and quoted by Dionysius of Halicarnassus, asserted that the Etruscans were a tribe of Pelasgi, not from Lydia, but from Greece, who being driven out of their country by the Hellenes, sailed to the mouth of the Po, and leaving their ships in that river, built the inland town of Cortona, whence advancing, they peopled the whole territory afterwards called Tyrrhenia[16].

Dionysius of Halicarnassus holds the account of those authors, who maintain that the Etruscans
[pg 22] were descended from the Lydians, to be utterly fabulous, principally on the ground that Xantus, the chief historian of Lydia, says nothing of any colony having emigrated thence to Italy; and he is of opinion, that those also are mistaken, who, like Hellanicus of Lesbos, believed the Etruscans and Pelasgi to be the same people. He conceives them to have been Aborigines, or natives of the country, as they radically agreed with no other nation, either in their language or manner of life. He admits, however, that a tribe of Pelasgi passed from Thessaly to the mouth of the Po many ages previous to the Trojan war, and directing their course to the south, occupied a considerable portion of the heart of Italy. Soon after their arrival, they assisted the aboriginal Etruscans in their wars with the Siculi, whom they forced to seek refuge in Sicily, the seat of the ancient Sicani. Subsequent to this alliance, they were again dispersed in consequence of disease and famine; but a few still remained behind, and being incorporated with the original inhabitants, bestowed on them whatever in language or customs appeared to be common to the Etruscans, with other nations of Pelasgic descent[17].

Several eminent writers among the moderns have partly coincided with Dionysius. Dempster seems to think that there was an indigenous population in Etruria, but that it was increased both by the Lydian emigration and by colonies of Pelasgi from Greece[18]. Bochart is nearly of the same opinion; only he farther admits of a direct intercourse between the Etruscans and Phœnicians, whence the former may have received many Oriental fables and customs. He denies, however, that there was any resemblance in the languages of these two people; and the Etruscan arts he believes to have been chiefly derived from Greece[19]. The opinion of Bochart on these latter points is so much the more entitled to weight, as his prepossessions would have led him to maintain an opposite system could it have been plausibly supported. Gibbon also declares in favour of Dionysius; and, as to the relation of Herodotus, he says, “L’opinion d’Herodote, qui les fait venir de la Lydie, ne peut convenir qu’aux poetes”[20]. Several recent Italian writers likewise have maintained, that, previous to the arrival of any Lydian or Pelasgic colony, there existed what they term an indigenous population, by which they do not merely signify a population whose origin
[pg 23] cannot be traced, since they hint pretty broadly, that Etruria had its Adam and Eve as much as Eden[21].

Gorius derives every thing Etruscan from Egypt or Phœnicia. These countries he considers as the original seats of the Pelasgi, who, being driven out of them, settled in Achaia, Thrace, Arcadia, and Lydia, and from these regions gradually, and at different times, passed into Italy[22].

A similar system has been adopted by Lord Monboddo.—From a resemblance in their letters and

language to those of the Greeks, he believes the Etruscans to have been a very ancient colony of the roaming Pelasgi who left Arcadia in quest of new settlements. These Pelasgi, however, he maintains, were not themselves indigenous in Arcadia, as they issued originally from Egypt, where there was a district and a city of the name of Arcadia[23].

Mazzochi follows the oriental theory, but does not venture to determine from what eastern region the Etruscans emigrated. He merely affirms, that they spread from the east, under which term he includes regions very remote from each other—Assyria, Armenia, Canaan, and Egypt[24]. He also thinks that they came directly from the east, without having previously passed through Lydia or Arcadia: For, if they had, the monuments of these latter countries would exhibit (which they do not) still stronger remains of oriental antiquity than those of the Etruscans. This descent Mazzochi attempts to confirm by the most fanciful derivations of words and proper names of the Etruscan nation from the eastern languages, especially from the Hebrew and Syriac. Thus one of the most extensive plains in Italy, and the spot where, in all probability, the oriental colony first landed, is near the æstuary of the Po. This plain they naturally called Paddan, one of the names of the level Mesopotamia, and the appellation of the district soon came to be transferred to the river Padus or Po, by which it was bounded. It occurred to the author, however, that the Eridanus was the more ancient name of the Po; but this only furnishes him with a new argument. Eraz, it seems, signifies in Hebrew, a cedar, or any sort of resinous tree, and the orientals, finding a number of trees of this nature on the banks of the Po, and Z being a convertible letter with D,
[pg 24] they could not fail to call the river, near which they grew in such abundance, the Eridanus[25].

Bonarota has deduced the origin of the Etruscans from Egypt—a theory which has chiefly been grounded on the resemblance of the remains of their arts with the monuments of the ancient Egyptians[26].

Maffei brings them directly from Canaan, and supposes them to have been the race expelled from that region by the Moabites, or children of Lot. The river Arnon, (whence Arno,) flowed not far from that part of Canaan, where Lot and Abram first sojourned; one of its districts was called Etroth, (whence Etruria); and on the banks of the Arnon stood the city Ar, a syllable which is a frequent compound in Etruscan appellatives. The Etruscans erected their places of worship on hills or high places—they formed corporeal images of their divine beings like the idolatrous race from whom they sprung—but above all, their divinations and profession of augury, identified them with those original inhabitants of Canaan, of whom it is said, “that they hearkened unto observers of times and unto diviners”[27].

By far the most voluminous, but at the same time one of the most fanciful writers concerning the Etruscans, is Guarnacci, who maintains, that they came directly from the east, and were stragglers who had been dispersed by Noah’s flood, or, at the very latest, by the confusion at Babel. The Umbri and Aborigines, according to him, were the same people, under a different denomination, as the Etruscans: They gradually spread themselves over all Italy, and some tribes of them, called, from their wandering habits, Pelasgi, at length emigrated to Greece and Lydia; so that, whatever similarity has been traced in the language, religion, manners, or arts, of the Greeks and Etruscans, is the consequence of the Etruscan colonization of Greece, and not, as is generally supposed, of Italy having been peopled by Pelasgic colonies from Arcadia or Peloponnesus[28].

In general, the oriental system has been maintained in opposition to all other theories, chiefly on the ground that the Etruscans, like many eastern nations, wrote from right to left, and that, like
[pg 25] the Hebrews, they often marked down only the consonants, leaving the reader to supply the auxiliary vowels.

The oriental theory, in all its modifications, has been strenuously opposed by a number of learned Italian, French, and German antiquaries, who have contended for the northern and Celtic origin of the Etruscans, and have ridiculed the opinions of their predecessors as if they themselves were about to promulgate a more rational system. Bardetti, while he admits a colonization of Italy from foreign quarters, prior even to the Trojan war, maintains, that it was inhabited by a primitive population long before the landing of the Lydians or Pelasgi: That previous to the arrival of the latter tribe at the mouth of the Po, which happened 300 years before the siege of Troy, there had been no navigation to Italy from Egypt, or any other country: That, therefore, this primitive population must have come by land, and could have been no other than bands of Celts who were the immediate posterity of Japheth, and who, having originally settled in Gaul, descended to Italy from the Alps by Rhetium, Tirol, and Trent. Their first seats were the regions along the banks of the Po; the earliest tribes of their population were called Ligurians and Umbrians, and from them sprung the Etrurians, and all the other ancient nations of Italy[29].

A system nearly similar has been followed by Pelloutier[30], Freret[31], and Funccius[32], and has been adopted, with some modifications, by Adelung, and also by Heyne[33], who, however, admits that other tribes besides the Gallic race, may have contributed to the population of Etruria[34].

This theory, whether deducing the Etruscans from the Celts of Gaul or from the Teutonic tribes of Germany, is too often supported by remote and fanciful etymologies; and, so far as depends on authority, it chiefly rests on an ambiguous passage of the ancient historian Boccus, (quoted by Solinus,) where it is said, *Gallorum veterum propaginem Umbros esse*, and taken in connection with this, the assertion of Pliny, *Umbrorum gens antiquissima Italiæ existimatur*[35].

The most learned and correct writer on the subject of the Etruscans is Lanzi. In his elaborate work[36], (in which he has followed out and improved on a system first started by Ulivieri,) he does not pretend to investigate the origin of this celebrated race, though he seems to think that they were Lydians, augmented from time to time by tribes of the Pelasgi. But he has tried to prove that whatever may have been their descent, the religion, learning, language, and arts of the Etruscans must be referred to a Greek origin, and he refutes Gori and Caylus, who, deceived by a few imperfect analogies, ascribed them to the Egyptians. The period of Etruscan perfection in the arts, and formation of those vases and urns which we still admire, was posterior, he maintains, to the subjugation of Etruria by the Romans, and at a time when an intercourse with Greece had rendered the Etruscans familiar with models of Grecian perfection. As to the language, he does not indeed deny that all languages came originally from the east, and that many Greek words sprung from Hebrew roots; but there are in the Etruscan tongue, he asserts, such clear traces of Hellenism, particularly in the names of gods and heroes, that it is impossible to ascribe its origin to any other source. In particular, he attempts to show from the inscriptions on the Eugubian tables, that the Etruscan language was the Æolic Greek, since it has neither the monosyllables characteristic of northern tongues, nor the affixes and suffixes peculiar to oriental dialects[37].

From whatever nation originally sprung, the Etruscans at an early period attained an enviable height of prosperity and power. Etruria Proper, or the most ancient Etruria, reached from the Arno to the Tiber, being nearly bounded all along by these rivers, from their sources to their junction with the Tyrrhenian sea. Soon, however, the Etruscans passed those narrow limits;—to the north, they spread their conquests over the Ligurians, who inhabited the region beyond the Arno, and to this territory the conquerors gave the name of New Etruria. To the south, they crossed the Tiber, made allies or tributaries of the Latins, and introduced among them many of their usages and rites. Having thus opened a way through Latium, they drove the Osci from the
[pg 27] fertile plains of Campania, and founded the city of Capua, about fifty years before the building of Rome. Colonies, too, were sent out by them to spots beyond their immediate sway, till at length the Italian name was nearly sunk in that of the Etruscans. Their minds, however, were not wholly bent on conquest and political aggrandizement; their attention was also directed to useful institutions, and to the cultivation of the fine arts. The twelve confederated cities of Etruria were embellished with numberless monuments of architecture; wholesome laws were enacted, commerce was extended along all the shores of the Mediterranean: and, in short, by their means the general progress of civilization in Italy was prodigiously accelerated. The glory and prosperity of the Etruscans were at their height before Rome yet possessed a name. But their government, like that of all other republics, contained the seeds of decay. Each state had the choice of remaining as a commonwealth, or electing a king; but the Kings, or Lucumons, as they were usually called, were only the priests and presidents of the different cities of the confederation. There was no monarch of the whole realm; and it is the series of these Lucumons that has swelled the confused list of kings presented by Etruscan antiquaries. Each state had also the privilege of separately declaring war or concluding peace; and each appears, on all occasions, to have been more anxious for its own safety, than for the general interests of the union. Hence, rivalships and dissensions prevailed in the general assemblies of the twelve states. A confederate government, thus united by a link of political connection, almost as feeble as the Amphictyonic council of Greece, afforded no such compact resistance as could oppose an adequate barrier to the *unica vis* of the intrepid enemies with whom the Etruscans had now to contend. At sea they were assailed by the Syracusans and Carthaginians; the Umbrians retook several of their ancient possessions; they were forced to yield the plains which lie between the Alps and Apennines to the valour of the Gauls; and the Samnites expelled them from the yet more desirable and delicious regions of Campania.

While the Etruscans were thus again confined almost within the territory which still bears their name, and extends from the Tiber northward to the Apennines, a yet more formidable foe than any they had hitherto encountered appeared on the political theatre of Italy. It was Latium, which had the singular fortune to see one of its towns rise to the supreme dominion of Italy, and finally of the world. This city, which Dionysius of Halicarnassus represents as a respectable colony,
[pg 28] fitted out from Alba under the escort of Romulus, and thence supplied with money, provisions, and arms; but which was more probably composed of outlaws from the Equi, Marsi, Volsci, and other Latian tribes, had gradually acquired strength, while the power of the Etruscans had decayed. Enervated by opulence and luxury[38], they were led to despise the rough unpolished manners of the Romans; but during centuries of almost incessant warfare, they were daily taught to dread their military skill and prowess. The fall of Veii was a tremendous warning, and they now sought to preserve their independence rather by stratagem than force of arms. At length, in an evil hour, they availed themselves of the difficulties of their enemy; and, while the rival republic was pressed on the south by the Samnites, they leagued with those northern hordes which descended from the Alps to the anticipated conquest of Rome. Before they had fully united with the Gauls, the Consul Dolabella annihilated, near the Lake Vadimona, the military population of Etruria, and the feeble remains of the nation received the imperious conditions of peace, dictated by the victors, which left them nothing but the shadow of a great name,—the glory of attending the Roman march to the conquest of the world, and the vestiges of arts destined to attract the curiosity and research of the latest posterity.

The vicinity of the Etruscans to Rome, from which their territories were separated only by the Tiber,—the alliance of their leader, Cœlius, with Romulus, and the habitation assigned them on the Cœlian Mount,—the accession to the Roman sovereignty of the elder Tarquin, who was descended from a Greek family which had fixed its residence in Etruria,—the settlement of a number of Etruscan prisoners, four years after the expulsion of the kings, in a street called the *Vicus Tuscus*, in the very heart of the city;—and, finally, the intercourse produced by the long period of warfare and political intrigue which subsisted between the rising republic and their more polished neighbours before they were incorporated into one state, would be sufficient to account for the Roman reception of the customs and superstitions of Etruria, as also for the interchange of literary materials. It does not seem that the hostility of rival nations prevents the reciprocal adoption of manners and literature. The romantic gallantry and learning of the Arabs in the south of Spain soon passed the limits of their splendid empire; and long before the conquest of Wales the Cambrian fables and traditions concerning Arthur and his host of heroes
[pg 29] were domesticated in the court of England. Accordingly, we find that the Romans were indebted to the Etruscans for the form of the robes which invested their magistrates, the pomp that attended their triumphs, and even the music that animated their legions. The purple vest, the sceptre surmounted by an eagle, the curule chair, the fasces and lictors, were the ensigns and accompaniments of supreme authority among the Etruscans; while the triumphs and ovations, the combats of gladiators and Circensian games, were common to them and the Romans.

The simple and rustic divinities of Etruria and Latium were likewise the objects of Roman idolatry, long before the introduction of that more imposing and elegant mythology which had been embellished by the conceptions of Homer and the hand of Phidias. Saturn, the reformer of civil life, though afterwards confounded with the Kronos of the Greeks, was not of Greek origin. Janus, the *Deorum Deus* of the Salian verses, to whom the Romans offered their first sacrifices, and addressed their first prayers, and whom system-framers have identified with Noah[39], the Indian Ganesa[40], the Egyptian Oannes[41], and the Ion of the Scandinavians[42], or have represented as a symbolic type of all things in nature, was truly an Italian God:—

> “Nam tibi par nullum Græcia numen habet[43].”

Faunus and Picus, Bona Dea and Marica, were Etruscan or Latian divinities of the Saturnian family. Italy was also filled with many local deities, in consequence of those wonderful natural phænomena which it so abundantly exhibited, and which its early inhabitants ascribed to invisible powers. A sulphuric lake was the residence of the Nymph Albunea, and the medicinal founts of Abano were the acknowledged abodes of a beneficent genius.—“Nullus lucus sine fonte, nullus fons non sacer, propter attributos illis deos, qui fontibus præesse dicuntur[44].” All nature was thus linked by a continued chain of consecrated existence, from the God of Thunder to the simple Faun. The Vacunia and Feronia of the Sabines were naturalized by Numa, and the Vejove of Etruria presided in Rome at the general council of the twelve greater gods, long before a knowledge of the Grecian Mars or Jupiter. In all their mythology we may remark the grave and
[pg 30] austere character of the ancient Italians[45]. Their deities resembled not the obscene and vicious gods of Greece. They presided over agriculture, the rights of property, conjugal fidelity, truth and justice; and in like manner in early Rome,

> “Cana Fides et Vesta; Remo cum fratre Quirinus
> Jura dabant.” ——

Dionysius of Halicarnassus particularly points out the difference between the religion of the Greeks and the Romans. The latter, he informs us, “did not admit into their creed those impious stories told by the Greeks of the castration of their gods, or of destroying their own children, of their wars, wounds, bonds, and slavery, and such like things as are not only altogether unworthy of the divine nature, but disgrace even the human. They had no wailing and lamentations for the sufferings of their gods, nor like the Greeks, any Bacchic orgies, or vigils of men and women together in the temples. And if at any time they admitted such foreign pollutions, as they did with regard to the rites of Cybele and the Idæan goddess, the ceremonies were performed under the grave inspection of Roman magistrates; nor even now does any Roman disguise himself to act the mummeries performed by the priests of Cybele[46]”. Dionysius, who refers every thing to Greece, thinks that the early Roman was just the Greek religion purified by Romulus, to whom, in fact, his country was more indebted than to Numa for its sacred institutions. In reality, however, this superior purity of rites and worship was not occasioned by any such lustration of the Greek fables, but from their being founded on Italian, and not on Grecian superstitions.

But although the Etruscan mythology may have been more pure, and its rites more useful, than those of Greece, its fables were not so ingenious and alluring. Ora, the goddess of health and youth, was less elegant than Hebe; and even the genius of Virgil, who has chosen the Italian *Myths* for the machinery of the Æneid, could hardly bestow grace or dignity on the prodigy of the swarm of bees that hung in clusters from the Laurentian Laurel—on the story of the robber Cacus vomiting flames, the ships metamorphosed into nymphs, the sow which farrowed thirty white pigs, and thereby announced that the town of Alba would be built in thirty years, the puerile
[pg 31] fiction of the infancy of Camilla, or the hideous harpy which hovered round the head of Turnus, and portended his death. Accordingly, when the Romans were allured by the arts of Greece, the rude and simple traditions of Italian mythology yielded to the enticing and voluptuous fictions of a more polished people[47]. The tolerant spirit of Polytheism did not restrict the number of gods, and the ministers of superstition seemed always ready to reconcile the most discordant systems.

Hence the poet interwove the national traditions with the Greek fables, and concentrated in one the attributes of different divinities. Thus, the Greek Kronos was identified with Saturn; the rustic deities, Sylvanus and Faunus, peculiar to Latium, being confounded with Pan, the Satyrs, and Silenus, were associated with the train of Bacchus; Portumnus was converted into Palemon—a deity whom the Greeks had received from Phœnicia; Bona Dea was transformed to Hecate, and Libitina to Proserpine; and the Camesnæ, or Camenæ, of the family of Janus, who prophesied in Saturnian verse on the summit of Mount Janiculum, were metamorphosed into Muses[48]. Hercules, Jupiter, and Venus, gods of power and pleasure, occupied, with their splendid temples, the place of the peaceful and pastoral deities of Numa. Still, however, the national religion was in some measure retained, and Apollo and Bacchus, in particular, continued to be decorated with the characteristic emblems of Etruria.

The Etruscans do not seem to have believed, like the Greeks, that they were possessed of those interpretations of passing events or revelations of futurity which were obtained by immediate inspiration, whether delivered from the hill of Dodona, or the Delphian shrine. Their divination was supposed to be the result of experience and observation; and though not destitute of divine direction or concurrence, depended chiefly on human contrivance. Among them peculiar families, like the tribe of Levi, the Peruvian Incas, and the descendants of Thor and Odin, were depositaries of the secrets and ceremonies of religion. Their prognostics were taken from the
[pg 32] flight of birds[49], the entrails of animals, and observations on thunder. In the early ages of Rome, a band of Patrician youths was sent to Etruria, to be initiated in the mysteries of its religious rites[50]. The constant practice of consulting the gods on all enterprizes, public or private,—the belief, that prodigies manifested the will of heaven, and that the deities could be appeased, and their vengeance averted by expiations or sacrifices, were common to the Tuscan and Roman creeds. In short, the fervent spirit of Etrurian superstition passed undiminished to the Romans, who owed to its influence much of their valour, temperance, and patriotism. To this, Cicero in a great degree ascribes their political supremacy. The Romans, says he, were not superior in numbers to the Spaniards, in strength or courage to the Gauls, in address to the Carthaginians, in tactics to the Macedonians; but we surpass all nations in that prime wisdom by which we have learned that all things are governed and directed by the immortal gods.

To the same singular people from whom they derived their customs and superstitions, the Romans were much indebted for their majestic language. As their writers in a great measure owe their immortality to the lofty tones and commanding accents of the Latin tongue, it would be improper entirely to neglect its origin in entering on the literary history of Rome.

The supporters of the various systems with regard to the first peopling of Etruria, of course discover the elements of the Etruscan language in that of the different nations by whom they believe it to have been colonized. Lord Monboddo, for example, deduces both the Latin and Etruscan from the old Pelasgic; which language, he asserts, was first brought into Italy by a colony of Arcadians, seventeen generations before the Trojan war. He considers the Latin as the most ancient dialect of the Greek; and he remarks, that as it came off from the original stock earlier than the Doric, or Æolic, or any other Greek dialect now known, it has more of the roughness of the primitive Hebrew, from which he believes the Pelasgic to be derived[51]. Lanzi also thinks that both the Latin and Etruscan flowed from the Greek, and that the resemblance between the Etruscan and Latin was not occasioned by the derivation of the latter from the former, but was the necessary consequence of both having sprung from a common source.

It certainly is not easy to discover the primary elements of the Latin or any other language; but
[pg 33] its immediate origin may easily be traced. The inscriptions on the most ancient monuments which have been discovered, from the Alps to Calabria, shew that, from the time of the Etruscan supremacy, there was an universal language in Italy, varied, indeed, by dialects, but announcing a common origin in the inflections of words and the forms of characters. The language of the Etruscans had been so widely spread by their conquests, that it might almost be regarded as the general tongue of Italy, and the Latian, Oscan, and Sabine idioms, were in a great measure the same with the Etruscan. From these the early Latin language was chiefly formed; and what little Greek existed in its original composition came through these languages from the Pelasgic colonies, which in the remotest periods had intermixed with the Etruscans, and with the inhabitants of ancient Latium. “It is a great mistake,” says Horne Tooke, “into which the Latin etymologists have fallen, to suppose that all the Latin must be found in the Greek, for the fact is otherwise. The bulk and foundation of the Latin language is Greek; but great part of the Latin is the language of our northern ancestors grafted on the Greek; and to our northern languages the etymologist must go for that part of the Latin which the Greek will not furnish[52].” This author is correct, in affirming that all the Latin cannot be found in the Greek; but he is far in error if he mean to maintain that any part of the Latin came directly from the language of the Celts, or that their uncouth jargon was grafted on the Greek. The northern tongues, however, whether Celtic or Sclavonic, may have contributed to form those dialects of Italy which composed the original elements of the imperial language, and were exhibited in great variety of combinations for five centuries with little admixture of the Greek. The eminent grammarian is still farther mistaken in declaring that the foundation of the Latin language is Greek. That much of the Augustan Latin is derived from the Greek, is true. Gataker, who strenuously contends for the Greek origin of the whole Latin language, has, as a specimen, attempted to shew, that every word in the first five lines of Virgil’s Eclogues is drawn from the Greek[53]; and though part of his etymologies are
[pg 34] fanciful, yet in a very considerable portion of them he has been completely successful. But the case is totally different with the ancient remnants of the Latin language previous to the capture

of Tarentum. In the song of the *Fratres Arvales*, the oldest specimen of the language extant, there seem to be only two words which have any analogy to the Greek—*sal* from ἅλς and *sta* from ἱστημι. That there was little Greek incorporated with the Latin during the first ages of the Republic, is evident from the circumstance, that the Latin inscriptions of a former period were unintelligible to the historian Polybius, and the most learned Romans of his age. Now, as he himself was a Greek, and as the most learned Romans, by his time, had become good Greek scholars, any Grecisms in the ancient inscriptions would have been perfectly intelligible. It is evident, therefore, that the difficulty arose from the words of the old Italian dialects occurring instead of the new Greek terms, suddenly introduced after the capture of Tarentum, and to which the Romans having by that time become habituated, could not understand the language of a preceding generation. Besides, when Rome was originally filled with Latian bands—when the Etruscans and Oscans were immediately beyond the walls of Rome,—when, as early as the time of Romulus, the Sabines were admitted within them,—when all the women then in Rome were Sabines, (from which it may be presumed that much of the conversation was carried on in the Sabine dialect,) and, above all, when the Romans, for many centuries, had little intercourse with any other people than the Italian nations, it is not to be supposed that they would borrow their colloquial language from the Celts, on the other side of the Alps, or the Greeks, from whom they were separated by the Adriatic Gulf, and who, as yet, had established only remote, insignificant, and scattered colonies, in Italy. Varro, too, has shewn the affinity between the Sabine and the Latin languages[54]. That the Oscan resembled the old Latin, is proved from its being constantly employed in the most popular dramatic representations at Rome, and from the circumstance that almost every word of its few relics which remain, is the root of some equivalent Latin term. Thus Akeru produced acerra—Anter, inter—Phaisnam, fanum—Tesaur, Thesaurus—Famel, famulus—Multa, mulcta—Solum, (totus,) solus—Facul, Facultas—Cael, cœlum—Embratur, imperator.[55] The
[pg 35] copious admixture of Greek only took place after the taking of Tarentum, when the poets of Magna Græcia settled at Rome, and were imitated by native writers,

> "—— Cum lingua Catonis *et Enni*
> Sermonem patrium ditaverit, et nova rerum
> Nomina protulerit."

So far, then, from the Latin language being composed of Celtic grafted on the Greek, it appears to me to have been formed from the Greek, grafted on those various dialects of the Etruscan tongue, which prevailed in Italy at the period of the building of Rome.

It would have been singular, when the Romans derived so much from their Etruscan neighbours, if they had not also acquired a portion of those arts which were the chief boast of Etruria. Among the Etruscans, the arts certainly had not the imposing character they assumed in Egypt, or the elegance they exhibited in Greece[56]; but in their vases, tombs, and altars, which have recently been brought to light, we possess abundant proofs of their taste and ingenuity. In these—domestic occupations, marriages, spectacles, masquerades, contests in the Circus, equestrian exercises, the chase, triumphs, mysteries, funeral rites, Lares, Lamiæ, Lemures, and deities of every description,—in short, all ancient Etruria passes in review before the eye, which, in many instances, must admire the boldness of the attitudes, the elegance of the draperies, and justness of the proportions. The art of modelling, or sculpture, appears to have been that in which the Etruscans chiefly excelled. The statues of the first kings erected at Rome, in the reign of the elder Tarquin, were of their workmanship, as well as that of Horatius Cocles, and the equestrian statue of Clelia. The Jupiter of the Capitol was also Tuscan; and the four-wheeled chariot placed in his temple, received its last polish from Etruscan hands, under the first Roman consuls.

In the course of the 5th century of Rome, not fewer than 2000 Etruscan statues, which were probably little figures in bronze, were carried to that city from Volsinium, (now Bolsena,) which the Romans were accused of having besieged, in order to plunder it of these treasures. Architecture was unknown in Rome until the Tarquins came from Etruria: hence the works of the
[pg 36] kings, some of which still remain, were built in the Etruscan style, with large and regular, but uncemented blocks[57]. The most ancient and stupendous architectural monuments of Rome, were executed by Etruscan artists. Theirs were the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, the Circus, and Cloaca Maxima, which showed such a wonderful anticipation of the future magnitude of Rome[58], and which Livy pronounces equal to anything which had been produced by modern magnificence. Painting, too, was introduced at Rome from the Etruscans, about the middle of the fifth century, by one of the Fabian family, who had long resided in Etruria, and who himself painted in *fresco*, after his return, the interior of the Temple of Salus, and transmitted the sirname of *Pictor* to his descendants.

The excellence to which the Etruscans had attained in sculpture and architecture, forms a presumption of their proficiency in those sciences which are essential to eminence in the arts. As not a vestige of their writings remains, it is impossible to judge of the merits of their literary compositions. I suspect, however, that, like the ancient Egyptians, they had made much less progress in literature than in arts or science. What books they had, were extant, and well known, at Rome; yet Cicero and other Latin writers, who have the Greek authors perpetually in their mouths, scarcely ever allude to any works of the Etruscans, except treatises on augury or divination; and the only titles of the books, recorded by Roman writers, are the Libri Fatales, Libri Haruspicinæ, Sacra Acherontia, Fulgurales et Rituales Libri. It is said, indeed, that the Etruscans cultivated a certain species of poetry, sung or declaimed during the pomp of sacrifices, or celebration of marriages[59]. Such verses were first employed in Fescennia, a city of Etruria,

whence the ancient nuptial hymns of the Romans were called Fescennine. It is evident, however, that these Etruscan songs, or hymns, were of the very rudest description, and probably never were reduced into writing. They were a kind of *impromptus*, composed of scurrilous jests, originally recited by the Italian peasants at those feasts of Ceres, which celebrated the conclusion of their harvests; and they resembled the verses described in the well-known lines of Horace—

[pg 37]

> "Agricolæ prisci, fortes, parvoque beati,
> Condita post frumenta, levantes tempore festo
> Corpus, et ipsum animum spe finis dura ferentem,
> Cum sociis operum pueris, et conjuge fidâ,
> Tellurem porco, Sylvanum lacte piabant,
> Floribus et vino Genium, memorem brevis ævi;
> Fescennina per hunc inventa licentia morem
> Versibus alternis opprobria rustica fudit[60]."

It appears, also, that some of the ancient rustic oracles and prophecies of the Etruscans, were delivered in a rugged sort of verse called Saturnian—a measure which was adopted from them by the earliest Latin poets—

> "Scripsere alii rem
> Versibus quos olim Fauni vatesque canebant[61]."

Censorinus informs us, on the authority of Varro, that this ancient people was not without its chroniclers and historians—*In Tuscis Historiis quæ octavo eorum sæculo scripta sunt*[62]. But this eighth century of the Etruscans, according to the chronology followed by Lanzi, would be as late as the sixth century of Rome[63]; and, besides, it is evident from the context of Censorinus, that these pretended *histories* were, in fact, mere registers of the foundations of cities, and the births and deaths of individuals. Varro also mentions Etruscan tragedies composed by Volumnius[64]. No date to his productions, however, is specified, and Lanzi is of opinion, that he did not write in Etruria till after the dramatic art had made considerable progress at Rome; and it certainly may at least be doubted, if, previous to that period, the Etruscan stage had ever reached higher than extemporary recitations, or pantomimic entertainments of music and dancing.

But whatever the literature of the Etruscans may have been, it certainly had no influence on the progress of learning among the Romans. Neither the intercourse of the two nations, nor the capture of Veii, though followed by the final subjugation of the Etruscans, was attended with any literary improvement on the part of their unpolished neighbours. In fact, few nations have been more completely illiterate than the Romans were, during five centuries, from the commencement of their history; and of all the nations which have figured in the annals of mankind, none certainly attained the same height of power and grandeur, and civil wisdom, with equal ignorance of literature or the fine arts. For the pretended acquaintance of the elder Brutus with the
[pg 38] Pythagorean philosophy, it would be difficult, I suspect, to find any better authority than the romance of Clelia; and the learned academy, which some writers[65] have found in Numa's College of Pontiffs, must be classed, I fear, with Vockerodt's literary societies, which existed before the flood[66].

It is not difficult to account for this ignorance of the Romans during the first ages of their history. Rome was not, as has been asserted by Dionysius, a regular colony sent out from a well-regulated state, but was formed from a mixture of all kinds of people unacquainted with social life. It consisted of Romulus' own troop, and a confluence of banditti inured to lawless acts, and subsisting by rapine, who were called from their fastnesses by the proclamation of a bold, cunning, and hardy adventurer[67]. This desperate band would not be much softened or humanized by their union with the tribe of Sabines, who, in the time of Romulus, became incorporated with the state, if we may judge of Sabine civilization from the story of Tarpeia. Numa did much for the domestic melioration of his people: He subdivided them into classes, impressed their minds with reverence for religion, and encouraged agriculture; but there was no germ of literature which he could foster. For more than three centuries after his death, the persevering hostilities of neighbouring states, and the furious irruptions of the Gauls, scarcely allowed a moment of repose or tranquillity. The safety of Rome depended on its military preparations, and every citizen necessarily became a soldier. Learning and arts may flourish amid the wars and commotions of a mighty empire, because every individual is not essentially or actively involved in the struggle; but in a petty state, surrounded by foes, all are in some shape or other personally engaged in the conflict, and the result, perhaps, is viewed with intenser interest. The enemies of Rome were repeatedly at her gates, and once within her walls; and while the city thus resounded with martial alarms, literary leisure could neither be enjoyed nor accounted among the ingredients—

> "Vitam quæ faciunt beatiorem."

The exercise of arms, which commenced in order to preserve the new-founded city from
[pg 39] destruction, was continued for the sake of conquest and dominion; so that the whole pride of the Romans was still placed in valour and military success. At the first formation of their theatre, they were propitiated by the address, *Belli duellatores optimi*[68]. Whatever time could be snatched from warlike occupations, was devoted to agriculture. Each individual had two acres allotted to him, which he was obliged to till for the maintenance of his family. While thus labouring for

subsistence, he had little leisure to cultivate literature or the arts, and could find no inclination for such pursuits. Indeed, he was not allowed the choice of his occupations. The law of Romulus which consigned as ignominious all sedentary employments to foreigners or slaves, leaving only in choice to citizens and freemen the arts of agriculture and arms, long continued in undiminished respect and observance. Romulus, says Dionysius, ordered the same persons to exercise the employments both of husbandmen and soldiers. He taught them the duty of soldiers in time of war, and accustomed them in time of peace to cultivate the land[69].

During this period the Romans had nothing which can properly be termed, or which would now be considered as poetry—the shape in which literature usually first expands amongst a rude people. The verses which have come down to us under the character of Sibylline oracles, are not genuine. There probably at one time existed a few rude lines uttered by pretended prophetesses, and which were doubtless a political instrument, usefully employed in a state subject to popular commotions. The book delivered to Tarquin, and which was supposed to contain those ancient oracles, perished amid the conflagration in the Capitol, during the civil wars of Marius and Sylla. Even those collected in Greece, and the municipal states of Italy, in order to supply their place, and which were deposited in the temple of Apollo, on Mount Palatine, were burned by Stilicho in the reign of the Emperor Honorius. There is still extant, however, the hymn sung by the *Fratres Arvales*, a college of priests instituted by Romulus, for the purpose of walking in procession through the fields in the commencement of spring, and imploring from the gods a blessing on agriculture. Of a similar description were the rude Saturnian verses prescribed by Numa, and which were chaunted by the Salian priests, who carried through the streets those sacred shields, so long accounted the Palladium of Rome.

About the end of the fourth century from the building of the city, when it was for the first time
[pg 40] afflicted with a plague, the Senate having exhausted without effect their own superstitious ceremonies, and run over the whole round of supplications, decreed that *histrions* or players should be summoned from Etruria, in order to appease the wrath of the gods by scenic representations. These chiefly exhibited rude dances and gesticulations, performed to the sound of the flute[70]. There was no dialogue or song, but the pantomime did not consist merely of unmeaning gestures: It had a certain scope, and represented a connected plot or story[71]; but what kind of action or story was represented, is utterly unknown. This whimsical sort of expiation seems to have attracted the fancy of the Roman youths, who imitated the Etruscan actors; but they improved on the entertainment, by rallying each other in extemporary and jocular lines. The Fescennine verses, originally employed in Etruria at the harvest-homes of the peasants, were about the same period applied by the Romans to marriage ceremonies and public diversions.

There were also songs of triumph in a rude measure, which were sung by the soldiers at the ovations of their leaders. As early as the time of Romulus, when that chief returned triumphant to Rome after his victory over the Ceninenses and Antemnates, his soldiers followed him in military array, singing hymns in honour of their gods, and extemporary verses in praise of their commander[72]. Of this description, too, were the Pæans, with which the victorious troops accompanied the chariot of Cincinnatus, after he subdued the Equi[73], and with which they celebrated a spirited enterprize of Cossus, a tribune of the soldiers[74]. Sometimes these laudatory songs were seasoned with coarse jokes and camp jests, like those introduced at the triumph of C. Claudius, and of M. Livius[75].

The triumphal hymns were not altogether confined to the ceremony performed on the streets of Rome. Cicero informs us, on the authority of Cato's *Origines*, that at feasts and entertainments, it was usual for the guests to celebrate the praises of their native heroes to the sound of the flute[76]. Valerius Maximus says, that the verses were sung by the older guests, in order to excite the
[pg 41] youth to emulation[77]; and Varro, that they were chaunted by ingenuous youths[78]. The difference, however, between the two authors, is easily reconciled. The former speaks of the original composition of these ballads[79], while Varro, though the passage is imperfect, seems to refer to a later period, when they were brought out anew for the entertainment of the guests. Valerius talks of them as poems or ballads of considerable extent. It was many generations, however, before the age of Cato, that this practice existed; and by the time of Cicero, these national and heroic productions, if they ever had been reduced to writing, were no longer extant[80]. This is all that can be collected concerning these legends, from the ancient Roman writers, who had evidently very imperfect notions and information on the subject. Niebuhr, however, and M. Schlegel, seem as well acquainted with their contents as we are with Chevy Chase, and talk as if these precious relics were lying on their shelves, or as if they had been personally present at the festivals where they were recited. They expressed, it seems, feelings purely patriotic—they contained no inconsiderable admixture of the marvellous—but even the propensity for what was incredible was exclusively national in its character—and the Roman fablers indulged themselves in the creation of no wonders, which did not redound in some measure to the honour of their ancestors. They were founded on the oldest traditions concerning the kings and heroes of the infant city, and the establishment of the republican form of government. "The fabulous birth of Romulus," says Schlegel, "the rape of the Sabine women, the most poetical combat of the Horatii and Curiatii, the pride of Tarquin, the misfortunes and death of Lucretia, and the establishment of liberty by the elder Brutus—the wonderful war with Porsenna, and steadfastness of Scævola, the banishment of Coriolanus, the war which he kindled against his country, the subsequent struggle of his feelings, and the final triumph of his patriotism at the all-powerful intercession of his mother;—these and the like circumstances, if they be examined from the proper point of view, cannot fail to be considered as relics and fragments of the ancient heroic traditions and heroic

[pg 42] poems of the Romans[81].” Niebuhr, not contented with insulated ballads, has imagined the existence of a grand and complete Epopee, commencing with the accession of Tarquinius Priscus, and ending with the battle of Regillus[82]. This is a great deal more information than Cicero or Varro could have afforded us on the subject.

However numerous or extensive these ballads may have been, they soon sunk into oblivion; and in consequence of the overpowering influence of Greek authors and manners, they never formed the groundwork of a polished system of national poetry. The manifold witcheries of the Odyssey, and the harmony of the noble Hexameter, made so entire a conquest of the fancy and ears of the Romans, as to leave no room for an imitation, or even an affectionate preservation, of the ancient poems of their country, and led them, as we shall soon see, exclusively to adopt in their stead, the thoughts, the recollections, and the poetry of the Greeks. Cicero, in his *Tusculan Disputations*, mentions a poem by Appius Claudius Cæcus, who flourished in the fifth century of Rome[83]; but he does not say what was the nature or subject of this production, except that it was Pythagorean; and this is the solitary authentic notice transmitted to us of the existence of any thing which can be supposed to have been a regular or continued poem, during the first five centuries that elapsed from the building of the city.

Since, then, we can discover, during this period, nothing but those feeble dawings of dramatic, satiric, and heroic poetry, which never brightened to a perfect day, the only history of Roman literature which can be given during the long interval, consists in the progress and improvement of the Latin language. In the course of these five centuries, it was extremely variable, from two causes.—1st, Although their policy in this respect afterwards changed, one of the great principles of aggrandizement among the Romans in their early ages, was incorporating aliens, and admitting them to the rights of citizens. Hence, there was a constant influx to Rome of stranger tribes; and the dissonance within its walls was probably greater than had yet been any where heard since the memorable confusion at Babel.—2d, The Latin was merely a spoken language, or at least had not received stability by literary composition—writing at that time being confined, (in consequence of the want of materials for it,) to treaties, or short columnar inscriptions. So remarkable was the fluctuation produced by these causes, even during a very short period, that
[pg 43] Polybius, speaking of a treaty concluded between the Carthaginians and Romans in the 245th Year of the City, during the Consulship of Publius Valerius and Marcus Horatius, declares, that the language used in it was so different from the Latin spoken in his time, that the most learned Romans could not explain its text[84].

Of this changeable tongue, the earliest specimen extant, and which is supposed to be as ancient as the time of Romulus, is the hymn chaunted by the *Fratres Arvales*, the college of priests above-mentioned, who were called *Fratres*, from the first members of the institution being the sons of Acca Laurentia, the nurse of Romulus. This song was inscribed, during the time of the Emperor Heliogabalus[85], on a stone, which was discovered on opening the foundations of the Sacristy at St Peter’s, in the year 1778. It is in the following words:—

“Enos Lases juvate,
Neve luerve Marmar sinis incurrer in pleoris.
Satur fufere Mars: limen sali sta berber:
Semones alternei advocapit cunctos.
Enos Marmor juvate,
Triumpe! triumpe!”

These words have been thus interpreted by Herman: “Nos Lares juvate, neve luem Mamuri sinis incurrere in plures. Satur fueris Mars: limen (*i. e.* postremum) sali sta vervex: Semones alterni jam duo capit cunctos. Nos Mamuri juvato—Triumphe! Triumphe”[86]! There are just sixteen letters used in the above inscription; and it appears from it, that at this early period the letter *s* was frequently used instead of *r*—that the final *e* was struck out, or rather, had not yet been added—the rich diphthong *ei* was employed instead of *i*, and the simple letter *p*, in words where *f* or *ph* came afterwards to be substituted.

Of the *Carmen Saliare*, sung by the Salian priests, appointed under Numa, for the protection of
[pg 44] the *Ancilia*, or Sacred Shields, there remain only a few words, which have been cited by Varro, who remarks in them, what has already been noticed with regard to the Hymn of the *Fratres Arvales*, that the letter *s* often occurs in words where his contemporaries placed *r*—as Melios, for melior—Plusima, for plurima—Asena, for arena—Janitos, for janitor[87]. The *Carmen Saliare*, however, can scarcely be taken as a fair specimen of the state of the Roman language at the time it was composed. Among the nations adjacent to Rome, there were Salian priests, who had their hymns and solemn forms of invocation[88], which are said to have been, in part at least, adopted by Numa[89]. So that his *Carmen Saliare* probably approaches nearer to the Tuscan and Oscan dialects, than the Latin language did, even at that early period of the monarchy.

The fragments of a few laws, attributed to Numa, have been preserved by ancient jurisconsults and grammarians, and restored by Festus, with much pains, to their proper orthography, which had not been sufficiently attended to by those who first cited passages from this *Regiam Majestatem* of the Romans. One of these laws, as restored by him, is in the following terms:—“Sei cuips hemonem lobsum dolo sciens mortei duit pariceidad estod. sei im imprudens se dolo malod occisit pro capited oceisei et nateis eiius endo concioned arietem subicitod,” which law may be thus interpreted: “Si quis hominem liberum dolo sciens morti dederit parricida esto: Si cum

imprudens, sine dolo malo, occiderit, pro capite occisi et natis ejus in concionem arietem subjicito." A law, ascribed to Servius Tullius, has been thus given by Festus:—"Sei parentem puer verberit ast oloe plorasit, puer diveis parentum sacer esto—sei nurus sacra diveis parentum esto,"—which means, "Si parentem puer verberet, at ille ploraverit, puer divis parentum sacer esto; si nurus, sacra divis parentum esto"[90].

From the date of these *Leges Regiæ*, no specimen of the Latin language is now extant, till we come down to the Twelve Tables, enacted in the commencement of the fourth century of Rome. These celebrated institutions have descended to us in mutilated fragments, and their orthography has probably been in some respects modernised: yet they bear stronger marks of antiquity than the above-recited law of Servius Tullius, or even than those of Numa. The Latin writers themselves by whom they are quoted did not very well understand them, owing to the change
[pg 45] which had taken place in the language. Accordingly, Cicero, and the early grammarians who cite them, have attempted rather to give the meaning than the precise words of the Decemvirs. Terrasson has endeavoured to bring them back to the old Oscan language, in which he supposes them to have been originally written; but his emendations are in a great measure conjectural, and his attempt is one of more promise than fulfilment. On the whole, they have been so much corrupted by modernising them, and by subsequent attempts to restore them to the ancient readings, that they cannot be implicitly relied on as specimens of the Roman language during the period in which they were promulgated. The laws themselves are very concise, and free from that tautology, which seems the characteristic of the enactments of nations farther advanced in refinement. The first law is, "S' in jus vocat queat," which is extremely elliptical in its expression, and means, "Si quis aliquem in jus vocet, vocatus eat." In some respects the language of the *Leges Regiæ*, and twelve tables, possesses a richness of sound, which we do not find in more modern Latin, particularly in the use of the diphthong *ai* for *æ*, as vitai for vitæ, and of the diphthong *ei* for *i*, as sei for si. Horace might perhaps be well entitled to ridicule the person,

> "Sic fautor veterum, ut tabulas peccare vetantes,
> Quæ bisquinque viri sanxerunt, fœdera regum
> Vel Gabiis, vel cum rigidis æquata Sabinis,
> Pontificum libros, annosa volumina vatum,
> Dictitet Albano Musas in monte loquutas:"

Yet he would have done well to have considered, if, amid the manifold improvements of the Augustan poets, they had judged right in rejecting those rich and sonorous diphthongs of the *tabulæ peccare vetantes*, which still sound with such strength and majesty in the lines of Lucretius.

There is scarcely a vestige of the Latin language remaining during the two centuries which succeeded the enactment of the twelve tables. At the end of that long period, and during the first Punic war, a celebrated inscription, which is still extant, recorded the naval victory obtained by the Consul Duillius, in 492, over the Carthaginians. The column on which it was engraved, and which became so famous by the title of the *Columna Rostrata*, was, as Livy[91] informs us, struck down by lightning during the interval between the second and third Punic wars. It remained
[pg 46] buried among the ruins of Rome, till, at length, in 1565, its base, which contained the inscription, was dug up in the vicinity of the Capitol. So much, however, was it defaced, that many of the letters were illegible. These have been restored in the following manner by the conjectures of the learned:

"C. D[92]. exemet leciones maximosque magistratus *no*vem castreis exfociunt. Macel*lam pu*cnandod cepet enque eodem macis*tratu* rem navebos marid consol primos *ceset* clasesque navales primos ornavit cumque eis navebos claseis pœnicas om*nes* sumas copias Cartaciniensis præesente *d*ictatored olorum in altod marid puc*nandod vicit* trigintaque na*veis cepet* cum socieis septe*m* triremosque naveis XX captum numei DCC. captom æs navaled prædad poplom[93]."

In modern Latin the above inscription would run thus.—"Caius Duillius exemit: legiones, maximusque magistratus novem castris effugiunt. Macellam pugnando cepit; inque eodem magistratu, rem navibus mari Consul primus gessit, classesque navales primus ornavit; cumque iis navibus classes Punicas omnes summas copias Carthaginienses, præsente dictatore illorum, in alto mari pugnando vicit: Trigintaque naves cepit cum sociis septem, triremosque naves decem. Captum nummi, captum æs navali præda, populo donavit."

There are also extant two inscriptions, which were engraved on the tombstones of Lucius Scipio Barbatus and his son Lucius Scipio, of which the former was somewhat prior, and the latter a year subsequent to the date of the Duillian inscription. The epitaph on Barbatus was discovered in 1780, in the vault of the Scipian family, between the Via Appia and Via Latina. Mr Hobhouse informs us that it is inscribed on a handsome but plain sarcophagus, and he adds, "that the eloquent simple inscription becomes the virtues and fellow-countrymen of the deceased, and instructs us more than a chapter of Livy in the style and language of the Republican Romans"[94]:—

"Cornelius Lucius Scipio Barbatus Gnaivod patre prognatus fortis vir sapiensque quoius forma virtutei parisuma fuit. Consol Censor Aidilis quei fuit apud vos Taurasia Cisauna Samnio cepit subicit omne Loucana opsidesque abdoucit."

The above may be converted into modern Latin, as follows:

"C. L. Scipio Barbatus, Cneio patre prognatus, fortis vir sapiensque, cujus forma virtuti par fuit.
[pg 47] Consul, Censor, Ædilis qui fuit apud vos, Taurasiam, Cisaunam, Samnio cepit; subjecit omnem Lucaniam obsidesque abducit." The other Scipian epitaph had been discovered long before the above, on a slab which was found lying near the Porta Capena, having been detached from the family vault. Though a good many years later as to the date of its composition, the epitaph on the son bears marks of higher antiquity than that on the father:—

"Honc oino ploirume consentiunt duonoro optumo fuise viro Lucium Scipione. Filios Barbati Consol Censor Ædilis hec fuit. Hec cepit Corsica Aleriaque urbe: dedit tempestatibus aide mereto;" which means, "Hunc unum plurimi consentiunt Romæ bonorum optimum fuisse virum Lucium Scipionem. Filius Barbati, Consul, Censor, Ædilis his fuit. Hic cepit Corsicam Aleriamque urbem: dedit tempestatibus ædem merito".

The celebrated Eugubian tables were so called from having been found at Eugubium (Gubbio) a city in ancient Umbria, near the foot of the Apennines, where they were dug up in 1444. When first discovered, they were believed to be in the Egyptian language; but it was afterwards observed that five of the seven tables were in the Etruscan character and language, or rather in the Umbrian dialect of that tongue, and the other two in Roman letters, though in a rustic jargon, between Latin and Etruscan, with such mixture of each, as might be expected from an increased intercourse of the nations, and the subjugation of the one by the other.[95] The two tables in the Latin character were written towards the close of the sixth century of Rome, and those in the Etruscan letters a short while previous. So little, however, was the Etruscan language fixed or understood, even in the middle of last century, when the Etruscan rage was at its height in Italy, that Bonarota believed that those tables contained treaties of the ancient Italian nations—Gori, an Oscan poem, and Maffei, legal enactments, till Passerius at length discovered that they consisted solely of ordinances for the performance of sacred rites and religious ceremonies.[96]

[pg 48] On comparing the fragments of the *Leges Regiæ* with the Duillian and Scipian inscriptions, it does not appear that the Roman language, however greatly it may have varied, had either improved or approached much nearer to modern Latin in the fifth century than in the time of the kings. Short and mutilated as these laws and inscriptions are, they still enable us to draw many important conclusions with regard to the general state of the language during the existence of the monarchy, and the first ages of the republic. It has already been mentioned that the diphthong *ai* was employed where *ae* came to be afterwards substituted, as aide for æde; *ei* instead of *i*, as castreis for castris; and *oi* in place of *œ*, as coilum for cœlum. The vowel *e* is often introduced instead of *o*, as hemo for homo, while, on the other hand, *o* is sometimes used instead of *e*, as vostrum for vestrum; and Scipio Africanus is said to have been the first who always wrote the *e* in such words[97]. *U* is frequently changed into *o*, as honc for hunc, sometimes into *ou*, as abdoucit for abducit, and sometimes to *oi*, as oino for uno. On the whole, it appears that the vowels were in a great measure used indiscriminately, and often, especially in inscriptions, they were altogether omitted, as bne for bene, though sometimes, again, an *e* final was added, as face for fac, dice for dic. As to the consonants,—*b* at the beginning of a word was *du*, as duonorum for bonorum, and it was *p* at the middle or end, as opsides for obsides. The letter *g* certainly does not appear in those earliest specimens of the Latin language—the hymn of the *Fratres Arvales*, and *Leges Regiæ*, where *c* is used in its place. Plutarch says, that this letter was utterly unknown at Rome during the space of five centuries, and was first introduced by the grammarian Spurius Carvillius in the year 540[98]. It occurs, however, in the epitaph of Scipio Barbatus, which was written at least half a century before that date; and, what is remarkable, it is there placed in a word where *c* was previously and subsequently employed, Gnaivo being written for Cnæo. The Letter *r* was not, as has been asserted, unknown to the ancient Romans, but it was chiefly used in the beginning and end of words—*s* being employed instead of it in the middle, as lases for lares.
[pg 49] Frequently the letters *m* and *s* were omitted at the end of words, especially, for the sake of euphony, when the following word began with a consonant—thus we have Aleria cepit, for Aleriam cepit. The ancient Romans were equally careful to avoid a hiatus of vowels, and hence they wrote sin in place of si in. Double consonants were never seen till the time of Ennius[99]; and we accordingly find in the old inscriptions sumas for summas: *er* was added to the infinitive passive, as darier for dari, and *d* was subjoined to words ending with a vowel, as in altod, marid, pucnandod. It likewise appears that the Romans were for a long period unacquainted with the use of aspirates, and were destitute of the *phi* and *chi* sounds of the Greek alphabet. Hence they wrote triumpe for triumphe, and pulcer for pulcher[100]. We also meet with a good many words, particularly substantives, which afterwards became altogether obsolete, and some are applied in a sense different from that in which they were subsequently used. Finally, a difference in the conjugation of the same verb, and a want of inflection in nouns, particularly proper names of countries or cities, where the nominative frequently occurs instead of the accusative, show the unsettled state of the language at that early period[101].

It is unnecessary to prosecute farther the history of Roman inscriptions, since, immediately after the erection of the Duillian column in 494, Latin became a written literary language; and although the diphthongs *ai* and *ei* were retained for more than a century longer, most of the other archaisms were totally rejected, and the language was so enriched by a more copious admixture of the Greek, that, while always inferior to that tongue, in ease, precision, perspicuity, and copiousness, it came at length to rival it in dignity of enunciation, and in that lofty accent which harmonized so well with the elevated character of the people by whom it was uttered.

This sudden improvement in language, as well as the equally sudden revolution in taste and

literature by which it was accompanied, must be entirely and exclusively attributed to the conquest of Magna Græcia, and the intercourse opened to the Romans with the Greek colonies of Sicily. Their minds were, no doubt, in some measure prepared, during the five centuries which had followed the foundation of the city, for receiving the seeds of learning. The very existence of social life for so long a period must have in some degree reclaimed them from their native
[pg 50] barbarism. Freed from hourly alarms excited by the attacks of foes whose territories reached almost to the gates of the city, it was now possible for them to enjoy those pleasures which can only be relished in tranquillity; but their genius, I believe, would have remained unproductive and cold for half a millennium longer, had it not been kindled by contact with a more polished and animated nation, whose compositions could not be read without enthusiasm, or imitated without advantage.

However uncertain may be the story concerning the arrival of Œnotrus in the south of Italy, the passage of the Pelasgi from Epirus to the Po, seventeen generations before the Trojan war, or the settlement of the Arcadian Evander in Latium, there can be no doubt, that, about the commencement of the Roman æra, the dissensions of the reigning families of Greece, the commotions which pervaded its realms, the suggestions of oracles, the uncertain tenure of landed property, the restless spirit of adventure, and seasons of famine, all co-operated in producing an emigration of numerous tribes, chiefly Dorians and Achæans of Peloponnesus, who founded colonies on the coasts of Asia, the Ægean islands, and Italy. In this latter country, (which seems in all ages to have been the resort and refuse of a redundant or unfortunate population,) the Greek strangers first settled in a southern district, then known by the ancient name of Iapygia, and since denominated Calabria. Serenity of climate, joined to the vigour of laws, simplicity of manners, and the energy peculiar to every rising community, soon procured these colonies an enviable increase of prosperity and power. They gradually drove the native inhabitants to the interior of the country, and formed a political state, which assumed the magnificent name of Magna Græcia—an appellation which was by degrees applied to the whole coast which bounds the bay of Tarentum. On that shore, about half a century after the foundation of Rome, arose the flourishing and philosophic town of Crotona, and the voluptuous city of Sybaris. These were the consolidated possessions of the Grecian colonies; but they had also scattered seats all along the western coast of the territory which now forms the kingdom of Naples.

As in most other states, corruption of manners was the consequence of prosperity and the cause of decay. Towards the close of the third century of Rome, Pythagoras had in some measure succeeded in reforming the morals of Crotona, while the rival state of Sybaris, like the Moorish Grenada, hastened to destruction, amid carousals and civil dissensions; and though once capable, as is said, (but probably with some exaggeration,) of bringing three hundred thousand soldiers
[pg 51] into the field[102], it sunk, after a short struggle, under the power of Crotona. The other independent states were successively agitated by the violence of popular revolution, and crushed by the severity of despotism. As in the mother country, they had constant dissensions among themselves. This rivalship induced them to call in the assistance of the Sicilians—a measure which prepared the way for their subjection to the vigorous but detestable sway of the elder Dionysius, and of Agathocles. Tarentum, founded about the same time with Sybaris and Crotona, was the most powerful city of the Grecian colonies toward the conclusion of their political existence, and the last formidable rival to the Romans in Italy. Like the neighbouring states, it was chiefly ruined by the succour of foreign allies. Unsuccessfully defended by Alexander Molossus, oppressed by the Syracusan tyrants, and despoiled by Cleomenes of Sparta, neither the genius of Pyrrhus, nor the power of Carthage, could preserve it from the necessity of final submission to the Romans.

In all their varieties of fortune, the Grecian colonies had maintained the manners and institutions of the mother country, which no people ever entirely relinquish with the soil they have left. A close political connection also subsisted between them; and, about the year 300 of Rome, the Athenians sent to the assistance of Sybaris a powerful expedition, which, on the decay of that city, founded the town of Thurium in the immediate vicinity. This constant intercourse cherished and preserved the literary spirit of the colonies of Magna Græcia. Herodotus, the father of history, and Lysias, whose orations are the purest models of the simple Attic eloquence, were, in early youth, among the original founders of the colony of Thurium[103], and the latter held a share in its government till an advanced period of life. The Eleatic school of philosophy was founded in Magna Græcia; and the impulse which the wisdom of Pythagoras had given to the mind, promoted also the studies of literature. Plato visited Tarentum during the consulship of Lucius Camillus and Appius Claudius[104], which was in the 406th year of Rome, and Zeuxis was invited from Greece to paint at Crotona the magnificent temple of Juno, which had been erected in that
[pg 52] city[105]. History and poetry were cultivated with a success which did not dishonour the Grecian name. Lycus of Rhegium was the civil, and Glaucus of the same city was the literary historian of Magna Græcia. Orpheus of Crotona was the author of a poem on the expedition of the Argonauts, attributed to an elder Orpheus. The lyric productions of Ibicus of Rhegium rivalled those of Anacreon and Alcæus. Two hundred and fifty-five comedies, written by Alexis of Thurium, the titles of which have been collected by Meursius, and a few fragments of them by Stephens, are said to have been composed in the happiest vein of the middle comedy of the Greeks, which possessed much of the comic force of Aristophanes and Cratinus, without their malignity. In his Meropis and Ancylio, this dramatist is supposed to have carped at Plato; and his comedy founded on the life of Pythagoras, was probably in a similar vein of satire. Stephano, the son of Alexis, and who, according to Suidas, was the uncle of Menander, became chiefly celebrated for his

tragedies; but his comedies were also distinguished by happy pictures of life, and uncommon harmony of versification.

War, which had so long retarded the progress of literature at Rome, at length became the cause of its culture. The Romans were now involved in a contest with the civilized colonies of Magna Græcia. Accordingly, when they garrisoned Thurium, in order to defend it against the Samnites, and when in 482 they obtained complete possession of Magna Græcia, by the capture of Tarentum, which presented the last resistance to their arms, they could not fail to catch a portion of Grecian taste and spirit, or at least to admire the beautiful creations of Grecian fancy. Many of the conquerors remained in Magna Græcia, while, on the other hand, all the inhabitants of its cities, who were most distinguished for literary attainments, fixed their residence at Rome.

The first Carthaginian war, which broke out in 489, so far from retarding the literary influence of these strangers, accelerated the steps of improvement. Unlike the former contests of the Romans, which were either with neighbouring states, or with barbarous nations who came to attack them in their own territories, it was not attended with that immediate danger which is utterly inconsistent with literary leisure. In its prosecution, too, the Romans for the first time carried their arms beyond Italy. Literature, indeed, was not one of those novelties in which the western part of Africa was fruitful, but, with the exception of Greece itself, there was no country where it flourished more luxuriantly than in Sicily; and that island, as is well known, was the
[pg 53] principal scene of the first great struggle between Rome and Carthage. None of the Grecian colonies shone with such splendour as Syracuse, a city founded by the Dorians of Corinth, in the 19th year of Rome. This capital had attained the summit both of political and literary renown long before the first Carthaginian war. Æschylus passed the concluding years of his life in Sicily, and wrote, it is said, his tragedy of *The Persians*, to gratify the curiosity of Hiero I. King of Syracuse, who was desirous to see a representation of the celebrated war which the Greeks had waged against Xerxes. Epicharmus, retained in the same elegant court, was the first who rejected, on the stage, the ancient mummeries of the satires, and composed dramas on that regular elaborate plan, which was reckoned worthy of imitation by Plautus—

> “Dicitur ——————————————
> Plautus ad exemplar Siculi properare Epicharmi[106].”

Dionysius, the tyrant, was also a patron of learning, and was himself a competitor in the fields of literature. Philistus, the historian, was the friend of the elder, and Plato of the younger Dionysius. Aristippus and Æschines passed some time in the court of these tyrants. Theocritus, and other poets of the Alexandrian constellation, resided in Sicily before they partook in Egypt of the splendid patronage of the Ptolemies. The Syracusans, who put to death so many of their Athenian prisoners in cold blood, and with frightful tortures, spared those of them who could recite the verses of Euripides. Scenic representations were peculiarly popular in Sicily: Its towns were crowded with theatres, and its dramatists were loaded with honours. The theatrical exhibitions which the Roman invaders of Sicily must have witnessed, and the respect there paid to distinguished poets, would naturally awaken literary emulation. During a contest of nearly twenty-four years between Rome and Carthage, Hiero II., King of Syracuse, was the zealous and strenuous ally of the Romans. At the conclusion of peace between these rival nations, in the year 512, part of Sicily was ceded to the Romans, and the intercourse which consequently arose with the inhabitants of this newly-acquired territory, laid the foundation of those studies, which were afterwards brought to perfection by the progress of time, and by direct communication with Greece itself[107].

[pg 54] Accordingly, it is in the end of the fifth, and beginning of the sixth century, from the building of Rome, that we find among its inhabitants the earliest vestiges of literature. Poetry, as with most other nations, was the first of the liberal arts which was cultivated among the Romans; and dramatic poetry, founded on the school of Greece, appears to have been that which was earliest preferred. We have seen, indeed, that previous to this period, and in the year 392, when the city was afflicted with a plague, the Senate decreed that players should be summoned from Etruria to appease the wrath of the gods by scenic representations, and that the Roman youth imitated these expiatory performances, by rallying each other in extemporary verses. This by some has been considered as a dawning of the drama, since the characters probably bore a resemblance to the Arlequin and Scaramouch of the Italian farces. But

LIVIUS ANDRONICUS,

A native of Magna Græcia, was the first who attempted to establish at Rome a regular theatre, or to connect a dramatic fable, free from the mummeries, the *ballet*, and the melodrama of the ancient satires[108]. Tiraboschi asserts, that when his country was finally subdued by the Romans, in 482, Livius was made captive and brought to Rome[109]. It is generally believed that he there became the slave, and afterwards the freedman of Livius Salinator, from whom he derived one of his names: these facts, however, do not seem to rest on any authority more ancient than the Eusebian Chronicle[110]. The precise period of his death is uncertain; but in Cicero’s Dialogue *De*

Senectute, Cato is introduced saying, that he had seen old Livius while he was himself a youth[111]. Now Cato was born in 519, and since the period of youth among the Romans was considered as commencing at fifteen, it may be presumed that the existence of Livius was at least protracted till the year 534 of the city. It has been frequently said, that he lived till the year 546[112], because
[pg 55] Livy[113] mentions that a hymn composed by this ancient poet was publicly sung in that year, to avert the disasters threatened by an alarming prodigy; but the historian does not declare that it was written for the occasion, or even recently before.

The earliest play of Livius was represented in 513 or 514, about a year after the termination of the first Punic war. Osannus, a modern German author, has written a learned and chronological dissertation on the question, in which of these years the first Roman play was performed[114]; but it is extremely difficult for us to come to any satisfactory conclusion on a subject which, even in the time of Cicero, was one of doubt and controversy[115]. Like Thespis, and other dramatists in the commencement of the theatrical art, Livius was an actor, and for a considerable time the sole performer in his own pieces. Afterwards, however, his voice failing, in consequence of the audience insisting on a repetition of favourite passages, he introduced a boy who relieved him, by declaiming in concert with the flute, while he himself executed the corresponding gesticulations in the monologues, and in the parts where high exertion was required, employing his own voice only in the conversational and less elevated scenes[116]. It was observed that his action grew more lively and animated, because he exerted his whole strength in gesticulating, while another had the care and trouble of pronouncing. “Hence,” continues Livy, “the practice arose of reciting those passages which required much modulation of the voice, to the gesture and action of the comedian. Thenceforth the custom so far prevailed, that the comedians never pronounced anything except the verses of the dialogues[117]:” And this system, which one should think must have completely destroyed the theatric illusion, continued, under certain modifications, to subsist on the Roman stage during the most refined periods of taste and literature.

The popularity of Livius increasing from these performances, as well as from a propitiatory hymn he had composed, and which had been followed by great public success, a building was assigned to him on the Aventine hill. This edifice was partly converted into a theatre, and was also
[pg 56] inhabited by a troop of players, for whom Livius wrote his pieces, and frequently acted along with them[118].

It has been disputed whether the first drama represented by Livius Andronicus at Rome was a tragedy or comedy[119]. However this may be, it appears from the names which have been preserved of his plays, that he wrote both tragedies and comedies. These titles, which have been collected by Fabricius and other writers, are, *Achilles*, *Adonis*, *Ægisthus*, *Ajax*, *Andromeda*, *Antiopa*, *Centauri*, *Equus Trojanus*, *Helena*, *Hermione*, *Ino*, *Lydius*, *Protesilaodamia*, *Serenus*, *Tereus*, *Teucer*, *Virgo*[120]. Such names also evince that most of his dramas were translated or imitated from the works of his countrymen of Magna Græcia, or from the great tragedians of Greece. Thus, Æschylus wrote a tragedy on the subject of Ægisthus: There is still an Ajax of Sophocles extant, and he is known to have written an Andromeda: Stobæus mentions the Antiopa of Euripides: Four Greek dramatists, Sophocles, Euripides, Anaxandrides, and Philæterus, composed tragedies on the subject of Tereus; and Epicharmus, as well as others, chose for their comedies the story of the Syrens.

Little, however, except the titles, remains to us, from the dramas of Livius. The longest passage we possess in connection, extends only to four lines. It forms part of a hymn to Diana, recited by the chorus, in the tragedy of *Ino*, and contains an animated exhortation to a person about to proceed to the chase:—

> “Et jam purpureo suras include cothurno,
> Baltheus et revocet volucres in pectore sinus;
> Pressaque jam gravida crepitent tibi terga pharetra:
> Dirige odorisequos ad cæca cubilia canes[121].”

This passage testifies the vast improvement effected by Livius on the Latin Tongue; and indeed the polish of the language and metrical correctness of these hexameter lines, have of late led to a suspicion that they are not the production of a period so ancient as the age of Livius[122], or at least
[pg 57] that they have been modernised by some later hand. With this earliest offspring of the Latin muse, it may be curious to compare a production from her last age of decrepitude. Nemesianus, in his *Cynegeticon*, has closely imitated this passage while exhorting Diana to prepare for the chase:

> “Sume habitus, arcumque manu; pictamque pharetram
> Suspende ex humeris; sint aurea tela, sagittæ;
> Candida puniceis aptentur crura cothurnis:
> Sit chlamys aurato multum subtemine lusa,
> Corrugesque sinus gemmatis baltheus artet
> Nexibus ——”

As the above-quoted verses in the chorus of the *Ino* are the only passage among the fragments of Livius, from which a connected meaning can be elicited, we must take our opinion of his poetical merits from those who judged of them while his writings were yet wholly extant. Cicero has pronounced an unfavourable decision, declaring that they scarcely deserved a second perusal[123].

They long, however, continued popular in Rome, and were read by the youths in schools even during the Augustan age of poetry. It is evident, indeed, that during that golden period of Roman literature, there prevailed a taste corresponding to our black-letter rage, which led to an inordinate admiration of the works of Livius, and to the bitter complaints of Horace, that they should be extolled as perfect, or held up by old pedants to the imitation of youth in an age when so much better models existed:

> “Non equidem insector, delendaque carmina Livi
> Esse reor, memini quæ plagosum mihi parvo
> Orbilium dictare; sed emendata videri,
> Pulchraque, et exactis minimum distantia, miror:
> Inter quæ verbum emicuit si forte decorum, et
> Si versus paulo concinnior unus et alter;
> Injuste totum ducit venditque poema[124].”

But although Livius may have been too much read in the schools, and too much admired in an age, which could boast of models so greatly superior to his writings, he is at least entitled to praise, as the inventor among the Romans of a species of poetry which was afterwards carried by them to much higher perfection. By translating the Odyssey, too, into Latin verse, he adopted the means which, of all others, was most likely to foster and improve the infant literature of his
[pg 58] country—as he thus presented it with an image of the most pure and perfect taste, and at the same time with those wild and romantic adventures, which are best suited to attract the sympathy and interest of a half-civilized nation. This happy influence could not be prevented even by the use of the rugged Saturnian verse, which led Cicero to compare the translation of Livius to the ancient statues, which might be attributed to Dædalus[125].

The Latin Odyssey commenced—

> “Virum mihi, Camena, insece versutum.”

There have also been three lines preserved by Festus, which are translated from the 8th Book, expressing the effects produced on the mind by a sea-storm—

> —— “Namque nilum pejus
> Macerat hemonem quamde mare sævom: vires quoi
> Sunt magnæ, topper confringent importunæ undæ[126].”

From the æra in which the dramatic productions of Livius appeared, theatrical representations formed the object of a peculiar art. The more regular drama, founded on that of Magna Græcia, or Sicily, being divided into tragedy and comedy, became, in a great measure, the province of professional players or authors, while the Roman youths of distinction continued to amuse themselves with the *Fabulæ Atellanæ*, and *Exodia*, a species of satirical medley, derived from the ancient Etruscans, or from the Osci, the nature and progress of which I shall hereafter have occasion more particularly to examine.

CNEIUS NÆVIUS,

A native of Campania, was the first imitator of the regular dramatic works which had been produced by Livius Andronicus. He served in the first Punic war, and his earliest plays were represented at Rome in the year 519[127]. The names of his tragedies, from which as few fragments remain as from those of Livius, are still preserved:—*Alcestis*, (from which there is yet extant a description of old age in rugged and barbarous verse)—*Danae*, *Dulorestes*, *Hesiona*, *Hector*,
[pg 59] *Iphigenia*, *Lycurgus*, *Phœnissæ*, *Protesilaus*, and *Telephus*. All these were translated, or closely imitated from the works of Euripides, Anaxandrides, and other Greek dramatists. Cicero commends a passage in the *Hector*, one of the above-mentioned tragedies[128], where the hero of the piece, delighted with the praises which he had received from his father Priam, exclaims—

> “—— Lætus sum
> Laudari me abs te, pater, laudato viro[129].”

Nævius, however, was accounted a better comic than tragic poet. Cicero has given us some specimens of his jests, with which that celebrated wit and orator appears to have been greatly amused; but they consist rather in unexpected turns of expression, or a play of words, than in genuine humour. One of these, recorded in the second Book *De Oratore*, has found its way into our jest-books; and though one of the best in Cicero, it is one of the worst of Joe Miller. It is the saying of a knavish servant, “that nothing was shut up from him in his master’s house”.—“Solum esse, cui domi nihil sit nec obsignatum, nec occlusum: Quod idem,” adds Cicero, “in bono servo dici solet, sed hoc iisdem etiam verbis.”

Unfortunately for Nævius, he did not always confine himself in his comedies to such inoffensive jests. The dramas of Magna Græcia and Sicily, especially those of Epicharmus, were the

prototypes of the older Greek comedy; and accordingly the most ancient Latin plays, particularly those of Nævius, which were formed on the same school, though there be no evidence that they ridiculed political events, partook of the personal satire and invective which pervaded the productions of Aristophanes. If, as is related, the comedies of Nævius were directed against the vices and corporal defects of the Consuls and Senators of Rome, he must have been the most original of the Latin comic poets, and infinitely more so than Plautus or Terence; since although he may have parodied or copied the dramatic fables of the ancient Greek or Sicilian comedies, the spirit and colouring of the particular scenes must have been his own. The elder Scipio was one of the chief objects of his satiric representations, and the poetic severity with which Aristophanes persecuted Socrates or Euripides, was hardly more indecent and misdirected than the sarcasms of Nævius against the greatest captain, the most accomplished scholar, and the
[pg 60] most virtuous citizen of his age. Some lines are still extant, in which he lampooned Scipio on account of a youthful amour, in which he had been detected by his father—

> "Etiam qui res magnas manu sæpe gessit gloriose,
> Cujus facta viva nunc vigent, qui apud gentes solus
> Præstat, eum suus pater, cum pallio uno, ab amicâ abduxit."

The conqueror of Hannibal treated these libels with the same indifference with which Cæsar afterwards regarded the lines of Catullus. Nævius, however, did not long escape with impunity. Rome was a very different sort of republic from Athens: It was rather an aristocracy than a democracy, and its patricians were not always disposed to tolerate the taunts and insults which the chiefs of the Greek democracy were obliged to endure. Nævius had said in one of his verses, that the patrician family of the Metelli had frequently obtained the Consulship before the age permitted by law, and he insinuated that they had been promoted to this dignity, not in consequence of their virtues, but the cruelty of the Roman fate:

> "Fato Metelli Romæ fiunt Consules."

With the assistance of the other patricians, the Metelli retorted his sarcasms in a Saturnian stanza, not unlike the measure of some of our old ballads, in which they threatened to play the devil with their witty persecutor—

> "Et Nævio Poetæ,
> Cum sæpe læderentur,
> Dabunt malum Metelli,
> Dabunt malum Metelli,
> Dabunt malum Metelli."

The Metelli, however, did not confine their vengeance to this ingenious and spirited satire, in the composition of which, it may be presumed that the whole Roman Senate was engaged. On account of the unceasing abuse and reproaches which he had uttered against them, and other chief men of the city, he was thrown into prison, where he wrote his comedies, the *Hariolus* and *Leontes*. These plays being in some measure intended as a recantation of his former invectives, he was liberated by the tribunes of the people.[130] He soon, however, relapsed into his former courses, and continued to persecute the nobility in his dramas and satires with such implacable
[pg 61] dislike, that he was at length driven from Rome by their influence, and having retired to Utica[131], he died there, in the year 550, according to Cicero[132]; but Varro fixes his death somewhat later. Before leaving Rome, he had composed the following epitaph on himself, which Gellius remarks is full of Campanian arrogance; though the import of it, he adds, might be allowed to be true, had it been written by another[133];

> "Mortales immortales flere si foret fas,
> Flerent divæ Camœnæ Nævium poetam;
> Itaque postquam est Orcino traditus thesauro,
> Oblitei sunt Romæ loquier Latina lingua[134]."

Besides his comedies and the above epitaph, Nævius was also author of the Cyprian Iliad, a translation from a Greek poem, called the *Cyprian Epic*. Aristotle, in the 23d chapter of his Poetics, mentions the original work, (τα κυπρια,) which, he says, had furnished many subjects for the drama. Some writers, particularly Pindar, have attributed this Greek poem to Homer; and there was long an idle story current, that he had given it as a portion to his daughter Arsephone. Herodotus, in his second Book, concludes, after some critical discussion, that it was not written by Homer, but that it was doubtless the work of a contemporary poet, or one who lived shortly after him. Heyne thinks it most probable, that it was by a poet called Stasinus, a native of the island of Cyprus, and that it received its name from the country of its author[135]. Whoever may have written this Cyprian Epic, it contained twelve books, and was probably a work of amorous and romantic fiction. It commenced with the nuptials of Thetis and Peleus—it related the contention of the three goddesses on Mount Ida—the fables concerning Palamedes—the story of the daughters of Anius—and the love adventures of the Phrygian fair during the early period of the siege of Troy—and it terminated with the council of the gods, at which it was resolved that Achilles should be withdrawn from the war, by sowing dissension between him and Atrides[136].

[pg 62] A metrical chronicle, which chiefly related the events of the first Punic war, was another, and probably the last work of Nævius, since Cicero says, that in writing it he filled up the leisure of his latter days with wonderful complacency and satisfaction[137]. It was originally undivided; but,

after his death, was separated into seven books[138].—Although the first Punic war was the principal subject, as appears from its announcement,

"Qui terräi Latiäi hemones tuserunt
Vires fraudesque Poinicas fabor;"

yet it also afforded a rapid sketch of the preceding incidents of Roman history. It commenced with the flight of Æneas from Carthage, in a ship built by Mercury[139]; and the early wars of the Romans were detailed in the first and second books. To judge by the fragments which remain, the whole work appears to have been full of mythological machinery. Macrobius informs us, that some lines of this production described the Romans tost by a tempest, and represented Venus complaining of the hardships which they suffered to Jupiter, who consoles her by a prospect of their future glory—a passage which probably suggested those verses in the first book of the Æneid, where Venus, in like manner, complains to Jupiter of the danger experienced by her son in a storm, and the god consoles her by assurances of his ultimate prosperity[140]. Cicero mentions, that Ennius, too, though he classes Nævius among the fauns and rustic bards, had borrowed, or, if he refused to acknowledge his obligations, had pilfered, many ornaments from his predecessor[141]. In the same passage, Cicero, while he admits that Ennius was the more elegant and correct writer, bears testimony to the merit of the older bard, and declares, that the Punic war of this antiquated poet afforded him a pleasure as exquisite as the finest statue that was ever formed by Myron. To judge, however, from the lines which remain, though in general too much
[pg 63] broken to enable us even to divine their meaning, the style of Nævius in this work was more rugged and remote from modern Latin than that of his own plays and satires, or the dramas of Livius Andronicus.

The whole, too, is written in the rough, unmodulated, Saturnian verse—a sort of irregular iambics, said to have been originally employed by Faunus and the prophets, who delivered their oracles in this measure. To such rude and unpolished verses Ennius alludes in a fragment of his Annals, while explaining his reasons for not treating of the first Punic war—

—— "Scripsere alii rem
Versibus, quos olim Fauni, vatesque canebant;
Cum neque Musarum scopulos quisquam superarat,
Nec dicti studiosus erat."

As this was the most ancient species of measure employed in Roman poetry, as it was universally used before the melody of Greek verse was poured on the Roman ear, and as, from ancient practice, the same strain continued to be repeated till the age of Ennius, by whom the heroic measure was introduced, it would not be suitable to omit some notice of its origin and structure in an account of Roman literature and poetry.

Several writers have supposed that the Saturnian measure was borrowed by the Romans from the Greeks[142], having been used by Euripides, and particularly by Archilochus; but others have believed that it was an invention of the ancient Italians[143]. It was first employed in the Carmen Saliare, songs of triumph, supplications to the gods, or monumental inscriptions, and was afterwards, as we have seen, adopted in the works of Livius Andronicus and Nævius. In consequence of the fragments which remain of the Saturnian verses being so short and corrupted, it is extremely difficult to fix their regular measure, or reduce them to one standard of versification. Herman seems to consider a Saturnian line as having regularly consisted of two iambuses, an amphibrachys, and three trochaës—

˘ _ | ˘ _ | ˘ _ ˘ | _ ˘ | _ ˘ | _ ˘

A dactyl, however, was occasionally admitted into the place of the first or second trochaë, and a
[pg 64] spondee was not unfrequently introduced indiscriminately. It also appears that a Saturnian line was sometimes divided into two—the first line consisting of the two iambuses and amphibrachys, and the second of the trochaës, whence the Saturnian verse has been sometimes called iambic, and at others trochaic.

The Hexameter verse, which had been invented by the Greeks, was first introduced into Latium, or at least, was first employed in a work of any extent, by

ENNIUS,

—— "Qui primus amœno
Detulit ex Helicone perenni fronde coronam,
Per gentes Italas hominum quæ clara clueret."

This poet, who has generally received the glorious appellation of the Father of Roman Song, was a native of Rudiæ, a town in Calabria, and lived from the year of Rome 515 to 585[144]. In his early youth he went to Sardinia; and, if Silius Italicus may be believed, he served in the Calabrian

levies, which, in the year 538, followed Titus Manlius to the war which he waged in that island against the favourers of the Carthaginian cause[145]. After the termination of the campaign, he continued to live for twelve years in Sardinia[146]. He was at length brought to Rome by Cato, the Censor, who, in 550, visited Sardinia, on returning as quæstor from Africa[147]. At Rome he fixed his residence on the Aventine hill, where he lived in a very frugal manner, having only a single servant maid as an attendant[148]. He instructed, however, the Patrician youth in Greek, and acquired the friendship of many of the most illustrious men in the state. Being distinguished (like Æschylus, the great father of Grecian tragedy) in arms as well as letters, he followed M. Fulvius Nobilior during his expedition to Ætolia in 564[149]; and in 569 he obtained the freedom of the city, through the favour of Quintus Fulvius Nobilior, the son of his former patron, Marcus[150]. He was also protected by the elder Scipio Africanus, whom he is said to have accompanied in all his campaigns:

[pg 65]

> "Hærebat doctus lateri, castrisque solebat
> Omnibus in medias Ennius ire tubas[151]."

It is difficult, however, to see in what expeditions he could have attended this renowned general. His Spanish and African wars were concluded before Ennius was brought from Sardinia to Rome; and the campaign against Antiochus was commenced and terminated while he was serving under Fulvius Nobilior in Ætolia[152]. In his old age he obtained the friendship of Scipio Nasica; and the degree of intimacy subsisting between them has been characterised by the well-known anecdote of their successively feigning to be from home[153]. He is said to have been intemperate in drinking[154], which brought on the disease called *Morbus Articularis*, a disorder resembling the gout, of which he died at the age of seventy, just after he had exhibited his tragedy of Thyestes:

> "Ennius ipse pater dum pocula siccat iniqua,
> Hoc vitio tales fertur meruisse dolores[155]."

The evils, however, of old age and indigence were supported by him, as we learn from Cicero, with such patience, and even cheerfulness, that one would almost have imagined he derived satisfaction from circumstances which are usually regarded, as being, of all others, the most dispiriting and oppressive[156]. The honours due to his character and talents were, as is frequently the case, reserved till after his death, when a bust of him was placed in the family tomb of the Scipios[157], who, till the time of Sylla, continued the practice of burying, instead of burning, their dead. In the days of Livy, the bust still remained near that sepulchre, beyond the *Porta Capena*, along with the statues of Africanus and Scipio Asiaticus.[158] The tomb was discovered in 1780, on a farm situated between the Via Appia and Via Latina. The slabs, which have been since removed to the Vatican, bear several inscriptions, commemorating different persons of the Scipian family.
[pg 66] Neither statues, nor any other memorial, then existed of Africanus himself, or of Asiaticus[159]; but a laurelled bust of Pepperino stone, which was found in this tomb, and which now stands on the Sarcophagus of Scipio Barbatus in the Vatican, is supposed to be that of Ennius[160]. There is also still extant an epitaph on this poet, reported to have been written by himself[161], strongly characteristic of that overweening conceit and that high estimation of his own talents, which are said to have formed the chief blemish of his character:—

> "Aspicite, O cives, senis Ennî imaginis formam;
> Hic vestrum panxit maxuma facta patrum.
> Nemo me lacrumis decoret, nec funera fletu
> Faxit—cur? volito vivus per ora virûm[162]."

The lines formerly quoted[163], which were written by Nævius for his tomb-stone, express as high a sense of his own poetical merits as the above verses; but there is in them something plaintive and melancholy, quite different from the triumphant exultation in the epitaph of Ennius.

To judge by the fragments of his works which remain, Ennius greatly surpassed his predecessors, not only in poetical genius, but in the art of versification. By his time, indeed, the best models of Greek composition had begun to be studied at Rome. Ennius particularly professed to have imitated Homer, and tried to persuade his countrymen that the soul and genius of that great poet had revived in him, through the medium of a peacock, according to the process of Pythagorean transmigration. It is to this fantastic genealogy that Persius has alluded in his 6th satire:—

> "Cor jubet hoc Enni, postquam destertuit esse
> Mæonides Quintus, pavone ex Pythagoreo."

From the following lines of Lucretius it would appear, that Ennius somewhere in his works had feigned that the shade of Homer appeared to him, and explained to him the nature and laws of the universe:—

> "Etsi præterea tamen esse Acherusia Templa
> Ennius æternis exponit versibus edens;
> Quo neque permanent animæ, neque corpora nostra,
> [pg 67] Sed quædam simulacra modis pallentia miris:
> Unde, sibi exortam, semper florentis Homeri
> Commemorat speciem, lacrumas effundere salsas
> Cœpisse, et rerum naturam expandere dictis."

Accordingly, we find in the fragments of Ennius many imitations of the Iliad and Odyssey. It is, however, the Greek tragic writers whom Ennius has chiefly imitated; and indeed it appears from the fragments which remain, that all his plays were rather translations from the dramas of Sophocles and Euripides, on the same subjects which he has chosen, than original tragedies. They are founded on the old topics of Priam and Paris, Hector and Hecuba; and truly Ennius, as well as most other Latin tragedians, seems to have anticipated Horace's maxim—

> "Rectus Iliacum carmen deducis in actus,
> Quamsi proferres ignota indictaque primus."

But although it be quite clear that all the plays of Ennius were translated, or closely imitated, from the Greek, there is occasionally some difficulty in fixing on the drama which was followed, and also in ascertaining whether there be any original passage whatever in the Latin imitation. This difficulty arises from the practice adopted by the Greek dramatists, of new modelling their tragedies. Euripides, in particular, sometimes altered his plays after their first representation, in order to accommodate them to the circumstances of the times, and to obviate the sarcastic criticisms of Aristophanes, who had frequently exposed whole scenes to ridicule. With such views, considerable changes were made on *Iphigenia in Aulis*, the *Hippolytus*, and *Medea*. Euripides is the author from whom Ennius has chiefly borrowed the fables of his tragedies; and when Sophocles and Euripides have treated the same subject, the latter poet has been uniformly preferred. Not one of the dramas of Ennius has been imitated from Æschylus. The reason of this is sufficiently obvious: The plays of Æschylus have little involution of plot, and are rather what we should now term dramatic sketches, than tragedies. The plots of Sophocles are more complex than those of Æschylus; but the tragedies of Euripides are the most involved of all. Now, it may be presumed, that a tragedy crowded with action, and filled with the bustle of a complicated fable, was best adapted to the taste of the Romans, because we *know* that this was their taste in comedy. Plautus combined two Greek comedies to form one Latin; and the representation of the
[pg 68] Hecyra of Terence, the only Latin play formed on the simple Greek model, was repeatedly abandoned by the people before it was concluded, for the sake of amusements of more tumult and excitement.

Of *Achilles*, which, in alphabetical order, is the first of the plays of Ennius, there are just extant seven lines, which have been preserved by Nonius and Festus; and from such remains it is impossible to know what part of the life or actions of the Grecian hero Ennius had selected as the subject of his plot. There were many Greek tragedies on the story of Achilles, of which, one by Aristarchus of Tegea, was the most celebrated, and is supposed to have been that from which Ennius copied.

Ajax. Sophocles was author of two tragedies founded on the events of the life of Ajax;—*Ajax Flagellifer*, and *Ajax Locrensis*. The first turns on the phrensy with which the Grecian hero was seized, on being refused the arms of Achilles, and it may be conjectured, from a single fragment, apparently at the very close of the tragedy by Ennius, and which describes the attendants raising the body of Ajax, streaming with blood, that this was the piece translated by the Roman poet.

Alcmæon. This play, of which the fable closely resembles the story of Orestes, has by some been attributed to the Latin poet Quintus Catulus. The transports of Alcmæon had been frequently exhibited on the Greek stage[164]. The drama of Ennius was taken from a tragedy of Euripides, which is now lost, but its subject is well known from the Thebaid of Statius. The soothsayer Amphiaraus, foreseeing that he would perish at the siege of Thebes, concealed himself from the crimps of those days; but his wife, Eryphile, who alone knew the place of his retreat, being bribed by the gift of a mantle and necklace, revealed the secret to one of the "Seven before Thebes," who compelled him to share in the expedition. Before death, the prophet enjoined his son, Alcmæon, to avenge him on his faithless wife. The youth, in compliance with this pious command, slew his mother, and was afterwards tormented by the Furies, who would only be appeased by a gift of the whole *paraphernalia* of Eryphile, which were accordingly hung up in their temple. As soon as their persecution ceased, he married the fair Calirrhoe, daughter of Achelous, and precipitately judging that the consecrated necklace would be better bestowed on his beautiful bride than on the beldame by whom he had so long been haunted, he contrived, on false
[pg 69] pretences, to purloin it from the place where it was deposited; but the Furies were not to be so choused out of their perquisites, and in consequence of his rash preference, Alcmæon was compelled to suffer a renewed phrensy, and to undergo a fresh course of expiatory ceremonies[165].

Alexander (*Paris*). The plot of this play hinges on the destruction of Troy. The passages which remain are a heavenly admonition to Priam on the crimes of his son, a lamentation for the death of Hector, and a prediction of Cassandra concerning the wooden horse. Planck, in his recent edition of the *Medea* of Ennius, while he does not deny that our poet may have written a tragedy with the title of *Alexander*, is of opinion that the fragments quoted as from this play in the editions of Ennius belong properly to his *Alexandra* (*Cassandra*), to which subject they are perfectly applicable. This German critic has also collected a good many fragments belonging to the *Cassandra*, which had been omitted in Columna and Merula's editions of Ennius. The longest of these passages, delivered by Cassandra in the style of a prophecy, seems to refer to events previous to the Trojan war—the judgment of Paris, and arrival of Helen from Sparta.

Andromache. It is uncertain from what Greek writer this tragedy has been translated. It seems to be founded on the lamentable story of Andromache, who fell, with other Trojan captives, to the share of Neoptolemus, and saw her only son, Astyanax, torn from her embraces, to be

precipitated from the summit of a tower, in compliance with the injunctions of an oracle. Among the fragments of this play, we possess one of the longest passages extant of the works of Ennius, containing a pathetic lamentation of Andromache for the fall and conflagration of Troy, with a comparison between its smoking ruins and former splendour. This passage Cicero styles, "Præclarum Carmen!"—"Est enim," he adds, "et rebus, et verbis, et modis lugubre[166]."

—— "Quid petam
Præsidi aut exsequar? quo nunc aut exilio aut fuga freta sim?
Arce et urbe orba sum; quo accidam? quo applicem?
Cui nec aræ patriæ domi stant; fractæ et disjectæ jacent,
Fana flamma deflagrata; tosti alti stant parietes.
O Pater, O Patria, O Priami domus;
Septum altisono cardine templum:
Vidi ego te, adstante ope barbarica,
Tectis cælatis, laqueatis,
Auro, ebore instructum regifice.
[pg 70] Hæc omnia vidi inflammari,
Priamo vi vitam evitari,
Jovis aram sanguine turpari[167]."

Andromache Molottus is translated from the *Andromache* of Euripides, and is so called from Molottus, the son of Neoptolemus and Andromache.

Andromeda. Livius Andronicus had formerly written a Latin play on the well-known story of Perseus and Andromeda, which was translated from Sophocles. The play of Ennius, however, on the same subject, was a version of a tragedy of Euripides, now chiefly known from the ridicule cast on it in the fifth act of Aristophanes' *Feasts of Ceres*. That Ennius' drama was translated from Euripides, is sufficiently manifest, from a comparison of its fragments with the passages of the Greek Andromeda, preserved by Stobæus.

Athamas. There is only one short fragment of this play now extant.

Cresphontes. Merope, believing that her son Cresphontes had been slain by a person who was brought before her, discovers, when about to avenge on him the death of her child, that she whom she had mistaken for the murderer is Cresphontes himself.

Dulorestes. Of this play there is only one line remaining, and of course it is almost impossible to ascertain from what Greek original it was borrowed. Even this single verse has by several critics been supposed to be falsely attributed to Ennius, and to belong, in fact, to the Dulorestes of Pacuvius[168].

Erectheus. There is just enough of this play extant to have satisfied Columna, one of the editors of Ennius, that it was taken from a tragedy of the same name by Euripides. As told by Hyginus, the fable concerning Erectheus, King of Attica, was, that he had four daughters, who all pledged themselves not to survive the death of any one of their number. Eumolpus, son of Neptune, being slain at the siege of Athens, his father required that one of the daughters of Erectheus should be
[pg 71] sacrificed to him in compensation. This having been accomplished, her sisters slew themselves as a matter of course, and Erectheus was soon afterwards struck by Jupiter with thunder, at the solicitation of Neptune. The longest passage preserved from this tragedy is the speech of Colophonia, when about to be sacrificed to Neptune by her father.

Eumenides. This play, translated from Æschylus, exhibited the phrensy of Orestes, and his final absolution from the vengeance of the Furies.

Hectoris Lytris vel Lustra, so called from λυω, *solvo*, turned on the redemption from Achilles by Priam, of the body of Hector. It appears, however, from the fragments, that the combat of Hector, and the brutal treatment of his corpse by Achilles, had been represented or related in the early scenes of the piece.

Hecuba. This is a free translation from the Greek *Hecuba*, perhaps the most tragic of all the dramas of Euripides. From the work of Ennius, there is still extant a speech by the shade of Polydorus, announcing in great form his arrival from Acheron. This soliloquy, which is a good deal expanded from the original Greek, always produced a great sensation in the Roman theatre, and is styled by Cicero, *Grande Carmen*[169].—

"Adsum, atque advenio Acherunte, vix via alta, atque ardua,
Per speluncas saxeis structas aspereis pendentibus
Maxumeis; ubi rigida constat et crassa caligo inferûm;
Unde animæ excitantur obscura umbra, aperto ostio
Alti Acheruntis, falso sanguine imagines mortuorum[170]."

A speech of Hecuba, on seeing the dead body of Polydorus, and in which she reproaches the Greeks as having no punishment for the murder of a parent or a guest, seems to have been added by Ennius himself, at least it is not in the Greek original of Euripides. On the whole, indeed, the *Hecuba* of Ennius appears, so far as we can judge from the fragments, to be the least servile of his imitations. In Columna's edition of Ennius, an opportunity is afforded by corresponding

quotations from the Greek *Hecuba*, of comparing the manner in which the Latin poet has varied, amplified, or compressed the thoughts of his original. In Euripides, Hecuba, while persuading Ulysses to intercede for Polixena, says—

[pg 72]

> "Τὸ δ' αξίωμα, καν κακως λέγῃς, τὸ σόν
> Πείσει. Λόγος γαρ ἔκ τ' αδοξούντων ἰων,
> Και 'κ των δοκούντων αὐτὸς, οὐ ταυτὸν σθένει."

Ennius imitates this as follows:

> "Hæc tu, etsi perverse dices, facile Achivos flexeris;
> Namque opulenti cum loquuntur pariter atque ignobiles,
> Eadem dicta, eademque oratio æqua non æque valent."

This has been copied by Plautus, and from him by Moliere in his *Amphitrion*—

> "Tous les discours sont des sottises
> Partant d'un homme sans eclat;
> Ce seroient paroles exquisses,
> Si c'etoit un grand qui parlàt."

The last link in this chain of imitation, is Pope's well-known lines—

> "What woful stuff this madrigal would be,
> In some starved hackney sonnetteer or me!
> But let a lord once own the happy lines,
> How the wit brightens, how the style refines!"

Iliona sive Polydorus.—Priam, during the siege of Troy, had entrusted his son Polydorus to the care of Polymnestor, King of Thrace, who was married to Iliona, daughter of Priam, and slew his guest, in order to possess himself of the treasure which had been sent along with him. The only passage of the play which remains, is one in which the shade of Polydorus calls on Hecuba to arise and bury her murdered son.

Iphigenia.—Ennius, as already mentioned, appears invariably to have translated from Euripides, in preference to Sophocles, when the same subject had been treated by both these poets. Sophocles had written a tragedy on the topic of the well-known *Iphigenia in Aulis* of Euripides; but it is the latter piece which has been adopted by the Roman poet.

Boeckius has shown, in a learned dissertation, that Euripides wrote two *Iphigenias in Aulis*[171]. From the first, which has perished, Aristophanes parodied the verses introduced in his *Frogs*; and it was on this work that Ennius formed his Latin *Iphigenia*. The *Iphigenia* now extant, and published in the editions of Euripides, is a *recension* of the original drama, which was undertaken on account of the ridicule thrown on it by Aristophanes, and was not acted till after the death of
[pg 73] its author. Boeckius, indeed, thinks, that it was written by the younger Euripides, the nephew of the more celebrated dramatist; hence some of the lines of Ennius, which, on comparison with the *Iphigenia* now extant, appear to us original, were probably translated from the first written *Iphigenia*. Such, perhaps, are the jingling verses concerning the disadvantages of idleness, which are supposed, not very naturally, to be sung while weather-bound in Aulis, by the Greek soldiers, who form the chorus of this tragedy instead of the women of Chalcis in the play of Euripides:—

> "Otio qui nescit uti, plus negoti habet,
> Quam quum est negotium in negotio;
> Nam cui quod agat institutum est, in illo negotio
> Id agit; studet ibi, mentem atque animum delectat suum.
> Otioso in otio animus nescit quid sibi velit.
> Hoc idem est; neque domi nunc nos, nec militiæ sumus:
> Imus huc, hinc illuc; quum illuc ventum est, ire illinc lubet.
> Incerte errat animus—[172]."

Medea.—This play is imitated from the *Medea* of Euripides. Since the time of Paulus Manutius[173], an idea has prevailed that Ennius was the author of two plays on the subject of Medea—one entitled *Medea*, and the other *Medea Exsul*, both imitated from Greek originals of Euripides. This opinion was formed in consequence of there being several passages of the *Medea* of Ennius, to which corresponding passages cannot be found in the *Medea* of Euripides, now extant; and it was confirmed by the grammarians sometimes quoting the play by the title *Medea*, and at others by that of *Medea Exsul*. Planck, however, in his recent edition of the fragments of the Latin tragedy, conjectures that there was only one play, and that this play was entitled by Ennius the *Medea Exsul*, which name was appropriate to the subject; but that when quoted by the critics and old grammarians, it was sometimes cited, as was natural, by its full title, at others simply *Medea*. The lines in the Latin play, to which parallel passages cannot be found in Euripides, he believes to be
[pg 74] of Ennius' own invention. Osannus thinks, that neither the opinion of Manutius, nor of Planck, is quite accurate. He believes that Euripides wrote a *Medea*, which he afterwards revised and altered, in order to obviate the satiric criticisms of Aristophanes. The Greek *Medea*, which we now have, he supposes to be compounded of the original copy and the recension,—the ancient grammarians having interpolated the manuscripts. Ennius, he maintains, employed the original

tragedy; and hence in the Latin play, we now find translations of lines which were omitted both in the recension and in the compound tragedy, which is at present extant[174].

The *Medea* of Ennius was a popular drama at Rome, and was considered one of the best productions of its author. Cicero asks, if there be any one such a foe to the Roman name, as to reject or despise the *Medea* of Ennius. From the romantic interest of the subject, Medea was the heroine of not less than four epic poems; and no fable, of Greek antiquity, was more frequently dramatized by the Latin poets. Attius, Varro, Ovid, and Seneca, successively imitated the tragedy of Ennius, and improved on their model.

Phœnix.—There were two persons of this name in mythological story. One the son of Agenor, and brother of Cadmus, who gave name to Phœnicia; the other the preceptor of Achilles, who accompanied that hero to the Trojan war. The only reason for supposing that the tragedy of Ennius related to this latter person is, that a play founded on some part of his life was written by Euripides, from whom the Roman poet has borrowed so much.

Telamon.—This play, of which no Greek original is known, seems to have been devoted to a representation of the misfortunes of Telamon, particularly the concluding period of his life, in which he heard of the death of his eldest son Ajax, and the exile of his second son Teucer. To judge from the fragments which remain, it must have been by far the finest drama of Ennius. He thus happily versifies the celebrated sentiment of Anaxagoras, and puts it into the mouth of Telamon, when he hears of the death of his son—

> "Ego quom genui, tum moriturum scivi, et ei rei sustuli;
> Præterea ad Trojam quom misi ad defendendam Græciam,
> Scibam me in mortiferum bellum, non in epulas mittere[175]."

Ennius being an inhabitant of *Magna Græcia*, probably held the Tuscan soothsayers and diviners
[pg 75] in great contempt. There is a long passage cited by the grammarians as from this tragedy, (but which, I think, must rather have belonged to his satires,) directed against that learned body, and calculated to give them considerable offence—

> "Non habeo denique nauci Marsum augurem,
> Non vicanos haruspices, non de circo astrologos,
> Non Isiacos conjectores, non interpretes somniûm:
> Non enim sunt ii, aut scientiâ, aut arte divinei;
> Sed superstitiosi vates, impudentesque hariolei,
> Aut inertes, aut insanei, aut quibus egestas imperat:
> Qui sibi semitam non sapiunt, alteri monstrant viam;
> Quibus divitias pollicentur ab iis drachmam ipsei petunt:
> De his divitiis sibi deducant drachmam; reddant cætera[176]."

There is a good deal of wit and archness in the two concluding lines, and the whole breathes a spirit of free-thinking, such as one might expect from the translator of Euhemerus. In another passage, indeed, but which, I presume, was attributed to an impious character, or one writhing under the stroke of recent calamity, it is roundly declared that the gods take no concern in human affairs, for if they did, the good would prosper, and the wicked suffer, whereas it is quite the contrary:

> "Ego Deûm genus esse semper dixi, et dicam cœlitum;
> Sed eos non curare opinor, quid agat humanum genus;
> Nam si curent, bene bonis sit, male malis; quod nunc abest[177]."

Telephus is probably taken from a lost play of Euripides, ridiculed by Aristophanes in his *Acharnenses*, from a scene of which it would seem that Telephus had appeared on the stage in tattered garments. The passages of the Latin play which remain, exhibit Telephus as an exile from his kingdom, wandering about in ragged habiliments. The lines of Horace, in his Art of Poetry, (a work which is devoted to the subject of the Roman drama,) are probably in allusion to this tragedy:

[pg 76] > "Telephus et Peleus, cum pauper et exsul, uterque
> Projicit ampullas et sesquipedalia verba."

Thyestes.—The loose and familiar numbers in which the tragedy of Telephus was written, were by no means suitable to the atrocious subject of the Supper of Thyestes. Ennius accordingly has been censured by Cicero, in a passage of his *Orator*, for employing them in this drama.—"Similia sunt quædam apud nostros; velut illa in Thyeste,

> 'Quemnam te esse dicam! qui tarda in senectute,'

Et quæ sequuntur: quæ, nisi cum tibicen accesserit, orationi sunt solutæ simillima." There can therefore be little doubt that the passage in Horace's Art of Poetry, in which a tragedy on the subject of Thyestes is blamed as flat and prosaic, and hardly rising above the level of ordinary conversation in comedy, alluded to the work of Ennius—

> "Indignatur item privatis, ac prope socco
> Dignis carminibus, narrari cœna Thyestæ."

Yet this spiritless tragedy, was very popular in Rome, and continued to be frequently represented, till Varius treated the same subject in a manner, as we are informed by Quintilian, equal to the Greeks[178].

It thus appears that Ennius has little claim to originality or invention as a tragic author. Perhaps it may seem remarkable, that a poet of his powerful genius did not rather write new plays, than copy servilely from the Greeks. But nothing is ever invented where borrowing will as well serve the purpose. Rome had few artists, in consequence of the facility with which the finest specimens of the arts were procured by plundering the towns of Sicily and Greece. Now, at the period in which Ennius flourished, the productions of Grecian literature were almost as new to the Romans as the most perfectly original compositions. Thus, the dramatic works of Ennius were possessed of equal novelty for his audience as if wholly his own; while a great deal of trouble was saved to himself. The example, however, was unfortunate, as it communicated to Roman literature a character of servility, and of imitation, or rather of translation, from the Greek, which so completely pervaded it, that succeeding poets were most faultless when they copied most closely, and at length, when they abandoned the guides whom they had so long followed, they fell into
[pg 77] declamation and bombast. Probably, had the compositions of Ennius been original, they would have been less perfect, than by being thus imitated, or nearly translated, from the masterpieces of Greece. But the literature of his country might ultimately have attained a higher eminence. The imitative productions of Ennius may be likened to those trees which are transplanted when far advanced in growth. Much at first appears to have been gained; but it is certain, that he who sets the seedling is more useful than the transplanter, and that, while the trees removed from their native soil lose their original beauty and luxuriance without increase in magnitude, the seedling swells in its parent earth to immensity of size—fresh, blooming, and verdant in youth, vigorous in maturity, and venerable in old age.

Nor, although Ennius was the first writer who introduced satiric composition into Rome, are his pretensions, in this respect, to originality, very distinguished. He adapted the ancient satires of the Tuscan and Oscan stage to the closet, by refining their grossness, softening their asperity, and introducing railleries borrowed from the Greek poets, with whom he was familiar. His satires thus appear to have been a species of *centos* made up from passages of various poems, which, by slight alterations, were humorously or satirically applied, and chiefly to the delineation of character: “Carmen,” says Diomedes the grammarian, “quod ex variis poematibus constabat satira vocabatur, quale scripserunt Pacuvius et Ennius.” The fragments which remain of these satires are too short and broken to allow us even to divine their subject. That entitled *Asotus* vel *Sotadicus*, is the representation of a luxurious, dissolute man, and was so termed from Sotades, a voluptuous Cretan poet. Quintilian also mentions, that one of his satires contained a Dialogue between Life and Death, contending with each other, a mode of composition suggested perhaps by the celebrated allegory of Prodicus. We are farther informed by Aulus Gellius, that he introduced into another satire, with great skill and beauty, Æsop’s fable of the Larks[179], now well known through the imitation of Fontaine[180]. The lark having built her nest among some early corn, feared that it might be reaped before her young ones were fit to take wing. She therefore desired them to report to her whatever conversation they might hear in the fields during her absence. They first informed her, that the husbandman had come to the spot, and desired his son to summon their neighbours and friends to assist in cutting the crop the next morning. The lark,
[pg 78] on hearing this, declares, that there is no occasion to be in any haste in removing. On the following day, it is again reported, that the husbandman had desired that his relations should be requested to assist him; and the lark is still of opinion that there is no necessity to hurry away. At length, however, the young larks relate, that the husbandman had announced that he would execute the work himself. On hearing this, the old lark said it was now time to be gone. She accordingly removed her younglings, and the corn was immediately cut down by the master. From this tale Ennius deduces as the moral,

> “Hoc erit tibi argumentum semper in promptu situm;
> Ne quid expectes amicos, quod tute agere possis.”

It is certainly much to be regretted that we possess so scanty fragments of these satires, which would have been curious as the first attempts at a species of composition which was carried to such perfection by succeeding Latin poets, and which has been regarded as almost peculiar to the Romans.

The great work, however, of Ennius, and of which we have still considerable remains, was his Annals, or metrical chronicles, devoted to the celebration of Roman exploits, from the earliest periods to the conclusion of the Istrian war. These Annals were written by our poet in his old age; at least, Aulus Gellius informs us, on the authority of Varro, that the twelfth book was finished by him in his sixty-seventh year[181].

It may perhaps appear strange, that, when the fabulous exploits, the superstitions, the characters and the manners, of the heroic ages, were so admirably adapted for poetical imagery, and had been so successfully employed in Greece, the chief work of the Father of Roman Song should have been a sort of versified newspaper, like the *Henriade* of Voltaire, or the *Araucana* of Alonco de Ercilla: For in other countries poetry has been earliest devoted to the decoration of those marvels in which the *amantes mira Camœnæ* chiefly rejoice. In most lands, however, the origin of poetry was coeval with the rise of the nation, and every thing seems wondrous to an ignorant and timid race. The Greeks, in their first poetical age, peopled every grove and lake with fauns and

naiads, or personified the primeval powers of nature. They sung the fables concerning their gods,
[pg 79] and the exploits of heroes, in those ancient verses which have been combined in the Theogony attributed to Hesiod, and those immortal rhapsodies which have formed the basis of the Homeric poems. The marvellous vision of Dante was the earliest effort of the Italian muse; and some of the first specimens of verse in France and England were wild adventures in love or arms, interspersed with stories of demons and enchanters. But in Rome, though the first effort of the language was in poetry, five hundred years had elapsed from the foundation of the city before this effort was made. At that period, the Romans were a rude but rational race. The locks of Curius were perhaps uncombed; but though the Republic had as yet produced no character of literary elegance, she had given birth to Cincinnatus, and Fabricius, and Camillus. Her citizens had neither been rendered timid nor indolent by their superstitions, but were actively employed in agriculture or in arms. They were a less contemplative and imaginative race than the Greeks. Their spirit was indeed sufficiently warlike; but that peculiar spirit of adventure, (which characterised the early ages of Greece, and the middle ages of modern Europe,) had, if it ever existed, long ago ceased in Rome. By this time, the Roman armies were too well disciplined, and the system of warfare too regular, to admit a description of the picturesque combats of the Greek and Trojan charioteers. Poetry was thus too late in its birth to take a natural flight. In such circumstances, the bard, however rich or lofty might be his conceptions, would not listen to his own taste or inspiration, but select the theme which was likely to prove most popular; and the Romans, being a national and ambitious people, would be more gratified by the jejune relation of their own exploits, than by the *speciosa miracula* of the most sublime or romantic invention.

The Annals of Ennius were partly founded on those ancient traditions and old heroic ballads, which Cicero, on the authority of Cato's *Origines*, mentions as having been sung at feasts by the guests, many centuries before the age of Cato, in praise of the heroes of Rome[182]. Niebuhr has attempted to show, that all the memorable events of Roman history had been versified in ballads, or metrical chronicles, in the Saturnian measure, before the time of Ennius; who, according to him, merely expressed in the Greek hexameter, what his predecessors had delivered in a ruder strain, and then maliciously depreciated these ancient compositions, in order that he himself
[pg 80] might be considered as the founder of Roman poetry[183]. The devotion of the Decii, and death of the Fabian family,—the stories of Scævola, Cocles, and Coriolanus,—Niebuhr believes to have been the subjects of romantic ballads. Even Fabius Pictor, according to this author, followed one of these old legends in his narrative concerning Mars and the Wolf, and his whole history of Romulus. Livy, too, in his account of the death of Lucretia, has actually transcribed from one of these productions; since what Sextus says, on entering the chamber of Lucretia, is nearly in the Saturnian measure:—

> "Tace, Lucretia, inquit, Sextus Tarquinius sum,
> Ferrum in manu est, moriere si emiseris vocem[184]."

But the chief work, according to Niebuhr, from which Ennius borrowed, was a romantic epopee, or chronicle, made up from these heroic ballads about the end of the fourth century of Rome, commencing with the accession of Tarquinius Priscus, and ending with the battle of Regillus. The arrival, says Niebuhr, of that monarch under the name of Lucumo—his exploits and victories—his death—then the history of Servius Tullius—the outrageous pride of Tullia—the murder of the lawful monarch—the fall of the last Tarquin, preceded by a supernatural warning—Lucretia—Brutus and the truly Homeric battle of Regillus—compose an epic, which, in poetical incident, and splendour of fancy, surpasses everything produced in the latter ages of Rome[185]. The battle of Regillus, in particular, as described by the annalists, bears evident marks of its poetical origin. It was not a battle between two hosts, but a struggle of heroes. As in the fights painted in the Iliad, the champions meet in single combat, and turn by individual exertions the tide of victory. The dictator Posthumius wounds King Tarquin, whom he had encountered at the first onset. The Roman knight Albutius engages with the Latin chief Mamilius, but is wounded by him, and forced to quit the field. Mamilius then nearly breaks the Roman line, but is slain by the Consul Herminius, which decides the fate of the day. After the battle of Regillus, all the events are not so completely poetical; but in the siege of Veii we have a representation of the ten years war of Troy. The secret introduction of the troops by Camillus into the middle of the city resembles the story of the wooden horse, and the Etruscan statue of Juno corresponds to the Trojan Palladium[186].

Any period of history may be thus exhibited in the form of an epic cycle; and, though there can be
[pg 81] little doubt of the existence of ancient Saturnian ballads at Rome, I do not think that Niebuhr has adduced sufficient proof or authority for his magnificent epopee, commencing with the accession of Tarquin, and ending with the battle of Regillus. With regard to the accusation against Ennius, of depreciating the ancient materials which he had employed, it is founded on the contempt which he expresses for the verses of the Fauns and the Prophets. His obligations, if he owed any, he has certainly nowhere acknowledged, at least in the fragments which remain; and he rather betrays an anxiety, at the commencement of his poem, to carry away the attention of the reader from the Saturnian muses, and direct it to the Grecian poets,—to Pindus, and the nymphs of Helicon.

He begins his Annals with an invocation to the nine Muses, and the account of a vision in which Homer had appeared to him, and related the story of the metamorphosis already mentioned:—

> "Visus Homerus adesse poeta:

Hei mihi qualis erat, quantum mutatus ab illo!
. . . . . .
Septingenti sunt, paulo plus vel minus, anni
Quom memini fieri me pavom."

Ennius afterwards invokes a great number of the Gods, and then proceeds to the history of the Alban kings. The dream of the Vestal Virgin Ilia, which announced her pregnancy by Mars, and the foundation of Rome, is related in verses of considerable beauty and smoothness, by Ilia to her sister Eurydice.—

"Talia commemorat lacrumans, exterrita somno;
'Euridica prognata, pater quam noster amavit,
Vivens vita meum corpus nunc deserit omne.
Nam me visus homo polcer per amœna salicta
Et ripas raptare, locosque novos: ita sola
Post illa, germana soror, errare videbar;
Tardaque vestigare, et quærere, neque posse
Corde capessere: semita nulla pedem stabilibat.
Exin compellare pater me voce videtur
Heis verbis—O gnata, tibi sunt antegerendæ
Ærumnæ; post ex fluvio fortuna resistet.
Hæc pater ecfatus, germana, repente recessit;
Nec sese dedit in conspectum corde cupitus:
Quamquam multa manus ad cœli cærula Templa
Tendebam lacrumans, et blanda voce vocabam.
Vix ægro tum corde meo me somnus reliquit[187].'"

[pg 82] In these lines there is considerable elegance and pathos; and the contest which immediately succeeds between Romulus and Remus for the sovereignty of Rome, is as remarkable for dignity and animation:

"Curanteis magnâ cum curâ, concupienteis
Regnei, dant operam simul auspicio, augurioque:
Hinc Remus auspicio se devovet, atque secundam
Solus avem servat: at Romolus polcer in alto
Quærit Aventino, servans genus altivolantum.
Omnis cura vireis, uter esset Endoperator.
Exspectant, veluti consol, quom mittere signum
Volt, omneis avidei spectant ad carceris oras,
Qua mox emittat picteis ex faucibus currus.
Sic exspectabat populus, atque ore timebat
Rebus, utrei magnei victoria sit data regnei.
Interea Sol albus recessit in infera noctis:
Exin Candida se radiis dedit icta foras lux:
Et simol ex alto longe polcerrima præpes
Læva volavit avis: simol aureus exoritur sol.
Cedunt ter quatuor de cælo corpora sancta
Avium, præpetibus sese, polcreisque loceis dant.
Conspicit inde sibei data Romolus esse priora,
Auspicio regni stabilita scamna, solumque[188]."

[pg 83] The reigns of the kings, and the contests of the republic with the neighbouring states previous to the Punic war, occupy the metrical annals to the end of the sixth book[189], which concludes with the following noble answer of Pyrrhus to the Roman ambassadors, who came to ransom the prisoners taken from them by that prince in battle:—

"Nec mî aurum posco, nec mî pretium dederitis;
Nec cauponantes bellum, sed belligerantes;
Ferro, non auro, vitam cernamus utrique,
Vosne velit, an me regnare Hera; quidve ferat sors
Virtute experiamur; et hoc simol accipe dictum:
Quorum virtutei belli fortuna pepercit,
Horumdem me libertatei parcere certum est:
Dono ducite, doque volentibus cum magneis Dîs[190]."

Cicero, in his *Brutus*, says, that Ennius did not treat of the first Punic war, as Nævius had previously written on that subject[191]; to which prior work Ennius thus alludes:—

"Scripsere alii rem,
Versibus, quos olim Faunei, vatesque canebant."

P. Merula, however, who edited the fragments of Ennius, is of opinion, that this passage of Cicero can only mean that he had not entered into much detail of its events, as he finds several lines in the seventh book, which, he thinks, evidently apply to the first Carthaginian war, particularly the description of naval preparations, and the building of the first fleet with which the Carthaginians were attacked by the Romans. In some of the editions of Ennius, the character of the friend and

military adviser of Servilius, generally supposed to be intended as a portrait of the poet himself[192], is ranged under the seventh book:—

"Hocce locutus vocat, quicum bene sæpe libenter
Mensam, sermonesque suos, rerumque suarum
[pg 84] Comiter impertit; magna quum lapsa dies jam
Parte fuisset de parvis summisque gerendis,
Consilio, induforo lato, sanctoque senatu;
Cui res audacter magnas, parvasque, jocumque
Eloqueret, quæ tincta maleis, et quæ bona dictu
Evomeret, si quid vellet, tutoque locaret.
Quocum multa volup ac gaudia clamque palamque.
Ingenium cui nulla malum sententia suadet,
Ut faceret facinus; lenis tamen, haud malus; idem
Doctus, fidelis, suavis homo, facundus, suoque
Contentus, scitus, atque beatus, secunda loquens in
Tempore commodus, et verborum vir paucorum.
Multa tenens antiqua sepulta, et sæpe vetustas
Quæ facit, et mores veteresque novosque tenentem
Multorum veterum leges, divumque hominumque
Prudentem, qui multa loquive, tacereve possit.
Hunc inter pugnas compellat Servilius sic[193]."

The eighth and ninth books of these Annals, which are much mutilated, detailed the events of the second Carthaginian war in Italy and Africa. This was by much the most interesting part of the copious subject which Ennius had chosen, and a portion of it on which he would probably exert all the force of his genius, in order the more to honour his friend and patron Scipio Africanus. The same topic was selected by Silius Italicus, and by Petrarch for his Latin poem *Africa*, which obtained him a coronation in the Capitol. "Ennius," says the illustrious Italian, "has sung fully of Scipio; but, in the opinion of Valerius Maximus, his style is harsh and vulgar, and there is yet no elegant poem which has for its subject the glorious exploits of the conqueror of Hannibal." None of the poets who have chosen this topic, have done full justice to the most arduous struggle in which two powerful nations had ever engaged, and which presented the most splendid display of military genius on the one hand, and heroic virtue on the other, that had yet been exhibited to the
[pg 85] world. Livy's historical account of the second Punic war possesses more real poetry than any poem on the subject whatever.

The tenth, eleventh, and twelfth books of the Annals of Ennius, contained the war with Philip of Macedon. In the commencement of the thirteenth, Hannibal excites Antiochus to a war against the Romans. In the fourteenth book, the Consul Scipio, in the prosecution of this contest, arrives at Ilium, which he thus apostrophizes:

"O patria! O divûm domus Ilium, et incluta bello
Pergama!"

Several Latin writers extol the elegant lines of Ennius immediately following, in which the Roman soldiers, alluding to its magnificent revival in Rome, exclaim with enthusiasm, that Ilium could not be destroyed;

"Quai neque Dardaneeis campeis potuere perire,
Nec quom capta capei, nec quom combusta cremari[194];"

a passage which has been closely imitated in the seventh book of Virgil:

"Num Sigeis occumbere campis,
Num capti potuere capi: num incensa cremavit
Troja viros?"

The fifteenth book related the expedition of Fulvius Nobilior to Ætolia, which Ennius himself is said to have accompanied. In the two following books he prosecuted the Istrian war; which concludes with the following animated description of a single hero withstanding the attack of an armed host:—

"Undique conveniunt, velut imber, tela Tribuno.
Configunt parmam, tinnit hastilibus umbo,
Æratæ sonitant galeæ: sed nec pote quisquam
Undique nitendo corpus discerpere ferro.
Semper abundanteis hastas frangitque, quatitque;
Totum sudor habet corpus, moltumque laborat;
Nec respirandi fit copia præpete ferro.
Istrei tela manu jacientes sollicitabant.
Occumbunt moltei leto, ferroque lapique,
Aut intra moeros, aut extra præcipi casu[195]."

[pg 86] The concluding, or eighteenth, book seems to have been in a great measure personal to the poet himself. It explains his motive for writing:—

—— “Omnes mortales sese laudarier optant;” ——

and he seemingly compares himself to a Courser, who rests after his triumphs in the Olympic games:—

“Sic ut fortis Equus, spatio qui sæpe supremo
Vicit Olumpiaco, nunc senio confectus quiescit[196].”

Connected with his Annals, there was a poem of Ennius devoted to the celebration of the exploits of Scipio, in which occurs a much-admired description of the calm of Evening, where the flow of the versification is finely modulated to the still and solemn imagery:—

“Mundus cœli vastus constitit silentio,
Et Neptunus sævus undeis aspereis pausam dedit:
Sol equeis iter repressit unguleis volantibus,
Constitere amneis perenneis—arbores vento vacant[197].”

With this first attempt at descriptive poetry in the Latin language, it may be interesting to compare a passage produced in the extreme old age of Roman literature, which also paints, by nearly the same images, the profound repose of Nature:—

—— “Tacet omne pecus, volucresque feræque,
Et simulant fessos curvata cacumina somnos;
Nec trucibus fluviis idem sonus; occidit horror
Æquoris, et terris maria acclinata quiescunt.”

Horace, in one of his odes, strongly expresses the glory and honour which the Calabrian muse of Ennius had conferred on Scipio by this poem, devoted to his praise:

“Non incendia Carthaginis impiæ,
Ejus qui domita nomen ab Africa
[pg 87] Lucratus rediit, clarius indicant
Laudes quam Calabræ Pierides[198].”

The historical poems of Ennius appear to have been written without the introduction of much machinery or decorative fiction; and whether founded on ancient ballads, according to one opinion[199], or framed conformably to historical truth, according to another[200], they were obviously deficient in those embellishments of imagination which form the distinction between a poem and a metrical chronicle. In the subject which he had chosen, Ennius wanted the poetic advantages of distance in place or of time. It perhaps matters little whether the ground-work of a heroic poem be historical or entirely fictitious, if free scope be given for the excursions of fancy. But, in order that it may sport with advantage, the event must be remote in time or in place; and if this rule be observed, such subjects as those chosen by Camoens or Tasso admit of as much colouring and embellishment as the *Faery Queen*. It is in this that Lucan and Voltaire have erred; and neither the soaring genius of the one, nor brilliancy of the other, could raise their themes, splendid as they were, from the dust, or steep the mind in those reveries in which we indulge on subjects where there is no visible or known bound to credulity and imaginings. Still the Annals of Ennius, as a national work, were highly gratifying to a proud ambitious people, and, in consequence, continued long popular at Rome. They were highly relished in the age of Horace and Virgil; and, as far down as the time of Marcus Aurelius, they were recited in theatres and other public places for the amusement of the people[201]. The Romans, indeed, were so formed on his style, that Seneca called them *populus Ennianus*—an Ennian race,—and said, that both Cicero and Virgil were obliged, contrary to their own judgment, to employ antiquated terms, in compliance with the reigning prejudice[202]. From his example, too, added to the national character, the historical epic became in future times the great poetical resource of the Romans, who versified almost every important event in their history. Besides the *Pharsalia* of Lucan, and *Punica* of Silius Italicus, which still survive, there were many works of this description which are now lost. Varro Atacinus chose as his subject Cæsar’s war with the Sequani—Varius, the deeds of Augustus and Agrippa—Valgius Rufus, the battle of Actium—Albinovanus, the exploits of Germanicus—Cicero, those of Marius, and the events of his own consulship.

[pg 88] We have already seen Ennius’s imitation of the Greeks in his tragedies and satires; and even in the above-mentioned historical poems, though devoted to the celebration of Roman heroes and subjects exclusively national, he has borrowed copiously from the Greek poets, and has often made his Roman consuls fight over again the Homeric battles. Thus the description of the combat of Ajax, in the 16th Book of the Iliad, beginning Αιας δ’ ουκετ’ ἐμιμνε, has suggested a passage, above quoted, from the fragments of the Istrian war; and the picture of a steed breaking from his stall, and ranging the pastures, is imitated from a similar description, in the 6th Book of the Iliad —

“Et tunc sicut Equus, qui de præsepibus actus,
Vincla sua magneis animeis abrumpit, et inde
Fert sese campi per cœrula, lætaque prata;
Celso pectore, sæpe jubam quassat simul altam:
Spiritus ex animâ calidâ spumas agit albas[203].”

Homer’s lines are the following:—

“Ὡς δ’ ὁτε τις στατος ἱππος, ακοςησας επι φατνῃ
Δεσμον απορρηξας θειει πεδιοιο κροαινων,
Ἐιωθως λουεσθαι εὐρρειος ποταμοιο,
Κυδιοων· ὑψου δε καρη ἐχει, αμφι δε χαιται
Ὠμοις αισσονται. ὁ δ’ αγλαιηφι πεποιθως,
Ριμφα ἑ γουνα φερει μετα τ’ ἠθεα και νομον ιππων[204].”

In order to afford an opportunity of judging of Ennius’s talents for imitation, I have subjoined from the two poets, who carried that art to the greatest perfection, corresponding passages, which are both evidently founded on the same Greek original—

“Qualis, ubi abruptis fugit præsepia vinclis,
Tandem liber, Equus, campoque potitus aperto;
Aut ille in pastus armentaque tendit equarum,
Aut, assuetus aquæ perfundi flumine noto,
Emicat, arrectisque fremit cervicibus alte
Luxurians; luduntque jubæ per colla, per armos[205].”

The other parallel passage is in Tasso’s Jerusalem Delivered—

“Come Destrier, che dalle reggie stalle,
Ove al uso dell’ arme si riserba,
[pg 89] Fugge, e libero alfin, per largo calle
Va tra gli armenti, o al fiume usato, o all’ erba;
Scherzan sul collo i crini, e sulle spalle:
Si scuote la cervice alta e superba:
Suonano i pie nel corso, e par ch’avvampi,
Di sonori nitriti empiendo i campi[206].”

To these parallel passages may be added a very similar, though perhaps not a borrowed description, from the earliest production of the most original of all poets, in which the horse of Adonis breaks loose during the dalliance of Venus with his master:—

“The strong-necked steed, being tied unto a tree,
Breaketh his rein, and to her straight goes he.
Imperiously he leaps, he neighs, he bounds,
And now his woven girts he breaks asunder,
The bearing earth with his hard hoof he wounds,
Whose hollow womb resounds like heaven’s thunder.
His ears up-prick’d, his braided hanging mane,
Upon his compass’d crest, now stands an end;
His nostrils drink the air, and forth again,
As from a furnace, vapours doth he send.
His eye which glisters scornfully, like fire,
Shows his hot courage and his high desire[207].”

The poem of Ennius, entitled *Phagetica*, is curious,—as one would hardly suppose, that in this early age, luxury had made such progress, that the culinary art should have been systematically or poetically treated. All that we know, however, of the manner in which it was prepared or served up, is from the *Apologia* of Apuleius. It was, which its name imports, a didactic poem on eatables, particularly fish, as Apuleius testifies.—“Q. Ennii *edes* phagetica, quæ versibus scripsit, innumerabilia piscium genera enumerat, quæ scilicet curiose cognorat.” It is well known, that previous to the time of Ennius, this subject had been discussed both in prose and verse by various Greek authors[208], and was particularly detailed in the poem of Archestratus the Epicurean—

“—— The bard
Who sang of poultry, venison, and lard,
Poet and cook ——”

It appears from the following passage of Apuleius, that the work of Ennius was a digest of all the previous books on this subject,—“Alios etiam multis versibus decoravit, et ubi gentium quisque eorum inveniatur, ostendit qualiter assus, aut jussulentus optime sapiat; nec tamen ab eruditis
[pg 90] reprehenditur.” The eleven lines which remain, and which have been preserved by Apuleius, mention the places where different sorts of fish are found in greatest perfection and abundance—

“Brundusii Sargus bonus est; hunc, magnus erit si,
Sume: Apriclum piscem scite, primum esse Tarenti;
Surrentei fac emas Glaucum,” &c.

Another poem of Ennius, entitled *Epicharmus*, was so called because it was translated from the Greek work of Epicharmus, the Pythagorean, on the Nature of Things, in the same manner as Plato gave the name of *Timæus* to the book which he translated from Timæus the Locrian. This was the same Epicharmus who invented Greek comedy, and resided in the court of Hiero of Syracuse. The fragments of this work of Ennius are so broken and corrupted, that it is impossible

to follow the plan of his poem, or to discover the system of philosophy which it inculcated. It appears, however, to have contained many speculations concerning the elements of which the world was primarily composed, and which, according to him, were water, earth, air, and fire[209]; as also with regard to the preservative powers of nature. Jupiter seems merely to have been considered by him as the air, the clouds, and the storm:

"Isteic is est Jupiter, quem dico, Græci vocant
Aera; quique ventus est, et nubes, imber postea,
Atque ex imbre frigus; ventus post fit, aer denuo:
Istæc propter Jupiter sunt ista, quæ dico tibei,
Qui mortales urbeis, atque belluas omneis juvat[210]."

This system, which had been previously adopted by the Etruscans, and had been promulgated in some of the Orphic hymns, nearly corresponds with that announced by Cato, in Lucan's *Pharsalia* —

"Jupiter est quodcunque vides, quocunque moveris;"

and is not far different from the Spinozism, in Pope's Essay on Man—

"Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,
Glows in the stars, and blossoms in the trees;
[pg 91] Lives through all life, extends through all extent,
Spreads undivided, operates unspent."

Ennius, however, whose compositions thus appear to have been formed entirely on Greek originals, has not more availed himself of these writings than Virgil has profited by the works of Ennius. The prince of Latin Poets has often imitated long passages, and sometimes copied whole lines, from the Father of Roman Song. This has been shown, in a close comparison, by Macrobius, in his *Saturnalia*[211].

ENNIUS, Book 1.
"Qui cœlum versat stellis fulgentibus aptum."
VIRGIL, Book 6.
"Axem humero torquet stellis ardentibus aptum."
ENNIUS, 1.
"Est locus Hesperiam quam mortales perhibebant."
VIRGIL, 1.
"Est locus Hesperiam Graii cognomine dicunt."
ENNIUS, 12.
"Unus homo nobis cunctando restituit rem;
Non ponebat enim rumores ante salutem.
Ergo postque magisque viri nunc gloria claret[212]."
VIRGIL, 6.
"Unus qui nobis cunctando restituis rem."
ENNIUS, 5.
"Quod per amœnam urbem leni fluit agmine flumen."
VIRGIL, 2.
"Inter opima virum leni fluit agmine Tybris."
ENNIUS, 1.
"Hei mihi qualis erat quantum mutatus ab illo."
VIRGIL, 2.
"Hei mihi qualis erat! quantum mutatus ab illo."
ENNIUS.
—— "Postquam discordia tetra
Belli ferratos postes portasque refregit[213]."
VIRGIL, 7.
"Impulit ipsa manu portas, et cardine verso
Belli ferratos rupit Saturnia postes."

[pg 92] In the longer passages, Virgil has not merely selected the happiest thoughts and expressions of his predecessor, but in borrowing a great deal from Ennius, he has added much of his own. He has thrown on common images new lights of fancy; he has struck out the finest ideas from ordinary sentiments, and expunged all puerile conceits and absurdities.

Lucretius and Ovid have also frequently availed themselves of the works of Ennius. His description of felling the trees of a forest, in order to fit out a fleet against the Carthaginians, in the seventh book, has been imitated by Statius in the tenth book of the *Thebaid*. The passage in his sixth satire, in which he has painted the happy situation of a parasite, compared with that of the master of a feast, is copied in Terence's Phormio[214]. The following beautiful lines have been imitated by innumerable poets, both ancient and modern:

"Jupiter hic risit, tempestatesque serenæ
Riserunt omnes risu Jovis omnipotentis[215]."

Near the commencement of his *Annals*, Ennius says,

"Audire est operæ pretium, procedere recte
Qui rem Romanam Latiumque augescere vultis;"

which solemn passage has been parodied by Horace, in the second satire of the first book:

"Audire est operæ pretium, procedere recte
Qui mœchis non vultis, ut omni parte laborent."

Thus it appears that Ennius occasionally produced verses of considerable harmony and beauty, and that his conceptions were frequently expressed with energy and spirit. It must be recollected, however, that the lines imitated by Virgil, and the other passages which have been here extracted from the works of Ennius, are very favourable specimens of his taste and genius. Sometimes poems, which have themselves been lost, and of which only fragments are preserved, in the citations of contemporary or succeeding authors, are now believed to have been finer productions than they perhaps actually were. It is the best passages which are quoted, and imitated, and are thus upborne on the tide of ages, while the grosser parts have sunk and perished in the flood. We are in this manner led to form an undue estimate of the excellence of
[pg 93] the whole, in the same manner as we doubtless conceive an exaggerated idea of the ancient magnificence of Persepolis or Palmyra, where, while the humble dwellings have mouldered into dust, the temples and pyramids remain, and all that meets the eye is towering and majestic. A few, however, even of the verses of Ennius which have been preserved, are very harsh, and defective in their mechanical construction; others are exceedingly prosaic, as,

"Egregie cordatus homo Catus Ælius Sextus;"

and not a few are deformed with the most absurd conceits, not so much in the idea, as in a jingle of words and extravagant alliteration. The ambiguity of the celebrated verse,

"Aio te Æacida Romanos vincere posse,"

may be excused as oracular, but what can be said for such lines as,

"Haud doctis dictis certantes sed maledictis.
O Tite tute Tate tibi tanta tyranne tulisti.
Stultus est qui cupida cupiens cupienter cupit."

This species of conceit was rejected by the good taste of subsequent Latin poets, even in the most degraded periods of literature; and I know no parallel to it, except in some passages of Sidney's Arcadia. Nothing can be a greater mistake, than to suppose that false taste and jingle are peculiar to the latter ages of poetry, and that the early bards of a country are free from *concetti*.

On the whole, the works of Ennius are rather pleasing and interesting, as the early blossoms of that poetry which afterwards opened to such perfection, than estimable from their own intrinsic beauty. To many critics the latter part of Ovid's observation,

"Ennius ingenio maximus—arte rudis,"

has appeared better founded than the first. Scaliger, however, has termed him, "Poeta antiquus magnifico ingenio: Utinam hunc haberemus integrum, et amisissemus Lucanum, Statium, Silium Italicum, *et tous ces garcons la*[216]." Quintilian has happily enough compared the writings of Ennius to those sacred groves hallowed by their antiquity, and which we do not so much admire
[pg 94] for their beauty, as revere with religious awe and dread[217]. Hence, if we cannot allow Ennius to be crowned with the poetical laurel, we may at least grant the privilege conceded to him by Propertius—

"Ennius hirsutâ cingat sua tempora quercu."

Politian, in his *Nutricia*, has recapitulated the events of the life of Ennius, and has given perhaps the most faithful summary of his character, both as a man and a poet—

"Bella horrenda tonat Romanorumque triumphos,
Inque vicem nexos per carmina degerit annos:
Arte rudis, sed mente potens, parcissimus oris,
Pauper opum, fidens animi, morumque probatus,
Contentusque suo, nec bello ignarus et armis."

But whatever may have been the merits of the works of Ennius, of which we are now but incompetent judges, they were at least sufficiently various. Epic, dramatic, satiric, and didactic poetry, were all successively attempted by him; and we also learn that he exercised himself in lighter sorts of verse, as the epigram and acrostic[218]. For this novelty and exuberance it is not difficult to account. The fountains of Greek literature, as yet untasted in Latium, were to him inexhaustible sources. He stood in very different circumstances from those Greek bards who had to rely solely on their own genius, or from his successors in Latin poetry, who wrote after the best productions of Greece had become familiar to the Romans. He was placed in a situation in which he could enjoy all the popularity and applause due to originality, without undergoing the labour of invention, and might rapidly run with success through every mode of the lyre, without possessing incredible diversity of genius.

The above criticisms apply to the poetical productions of Ennius; but the most curious point connected with his literary history is his prose translation of the celebrated work of Euhemerus, entitled, Ἱερα Αναγραφη. Euhemerus is generally supposed to have been an inhabitant of Messene, a city of Peloponnesus. Being sent, as he represented, on a voyage of discovery by Cassander, King of Macedon, he came to an island called Panchaia, in the capital of which, Panara, he found a temple of the Tryphilian Jupiter, where stood a column inscribed with a register of the births and deaths of many of the gods. Among these, he specified Uranus, his sons Pan and Saturn, and his daughters Rhea and Ceres; as also Jupiter, Juno, and Neptune, who were
[pg 95] the offspring of Saturn. Accordingly, the design of Euhemerus was to show, by investigating their actions, and recording the places of their births and burials, that the mythological deities were mere mortal men, raised to the rank of gods on account of the benefits which they had conferred on mankind,—a system which, according to Meiners and Warburton, formed the grand secret revealed at the initiation into the Eleusinian mysteries[219]. The translation by Ennius, as well as the original work, is lost; but many particulars concerning Euhemerus, and the object of his history, are mentioned in a fragment of Diodorus Siculus, preserved by Eusebius. Some passages have also been saved by St. Augustine; and long quotations, have been made by Lactantius, in his treatise *De Falsa Religione*. These, so far as they extend, may be regarded as the truest and purest sources of mythological history, though not much followed in our modern *Pantheons*.

Plutarch, who was associated to the priesthood, and all who were interested in the support of the vulgar creed, maintained, that the whole work of Euhemerus, with his voyage to Panchaia, was an impudent fiction; and, in particular, it was urged, that no one except Euhemerus had ever seen or heard of the land of Panchaia[220]: that the Panchaia Tellus had indeed been described in a flowery and poetical style, both by Diodorus Siculus and Virgil—

> “Totaque thuriferis Panchaia pinguis arenis[221].”

but not in such a manner as to determine its geographical position.

The truth, however, of the relation contained in the work of Euhemerus, has been vindicated by modern writers; who have attempted to prove that Panchaia was an island of the Red Sea, which Euhemerus had actually visited in the course of his voyage[222]. But whether Euhemerus merely recorded what he had seen, or whether the whole book was a device and contrivance of his own, it seems highly probable that the translation of Ennius gave rise to the belief of many Roman philosophers, who maintained, or insinuated, their conviction of the mortality of the gods, and whose writings have been so frequently appealed to by Farmer, in his able disquisition on the prevalence of the Worship of Human Spirits.

It is clear, that notwithstanding their observance of prodigies and religious ceremonies, there
[pg 96] prevailed a considerable spirit of free-thinking among the Romans in the age of Ennius. This is apparent, not merely from his translation of Euhemerus, and definition of the nature of Jupiter, in his *Epicharmus*, but from various passages in dramas adapted for public representation, which deride the superstitions of augurs and soothsayers, as well as the false ideas entertained of the worshipped divinities. Polybius, too, who flourished shortly after Ennius, speaks of the fear of the gods, and the inventions of augury, merely as an excellent political engine, at the same time that he reprehends the rashness and absurdity of those who were endeavouring to extirpate such useful opinions[223].

The dramatic career which had been commenced by Livius Andronicus and Ennius, was most successfully prosecuted by

PLAUTUS,

who availed himself, still more even than his predecessors, of the works of the Greeks. The Old Greek comedy was excessively satirical, and sometimes obscene. Its subjects, as is well known, were not entirely fictitious, but in a great measure real; and neither the highest station, nor the brightest talents, were any security against the unrestrained invectives of the comic muse in her earliest sallies. Cratinus, Eupolis, and Aristophanes, were permitted to introduce on the stage the philosophers, generals, and magistrates of the state with their true countenances, and as it were in *propria persona*; a license which seems, in some measure, to have been regarded as the badge of popular freedom. It is only from the plays of Aristophanes that we can judge of the spirit of the ancient comedy. Its genius was so wild and strange, that it scarcely admits of definition: and can hardly be otherwise described, than as containing a great deal of allegorical satire on the political measures and manners of the Athenians, and parodies on their tragic poets.

When in Athens the people began to lose their political influence, and when the management of their affairs was vested in fewer hands than formerly, the oligarchical government restrained this excessive license; but while the poets were prohibited from naming the individuals whose actions they exposed, still they represented real characters so justly, though under fictitious appellations, that there could be no mistake with regard to the persons intended. This species of drama, which

comprehends some of the later pieces of Aristophanes,—for example, his Plutus,—and is named
[pg 97] the Middle comedy, was soon discovered to be as offensive and dangerous as the old. The dramatists being thus at length forced to invent their subjects and characters, comedy became a general yet lively imitation of the common actions of life. All personal allusion was dropped, and the Chorus, which had been the great vehicle of censure and satire, was removed. The new comedy was thus so different in its features from the middle or the old, that Schlegel has been induced to think, that it was formed on the model of the latest tragedians, rather than on the ancient comedy[224]. In the productions of Agathon, and even in some dramas of Euripides, tragedy had descended from its primeval height, and represented the distresses of domestic life, though still the domestic life of kings and heroes. Though Euripides was justly styled by Aristotle the most tragic of all poets, his style possessed neither the energy and sublimity of Æschylus, nor the gravity and stateliness of Sophocles, and it was frequently not much elevated above the language of ordinary conversation. His plots, too, like the *Rudens* of Plautus, often hinge on the fear of women, lest they be torn from the shrines or altars to which they had fled for protection; and what may be regarded as a confirmation of this opinion is, that Euripides, who had been so severely satirized by Aristophanes, was extravagantly extolled by Philemon, in his own age the most popular writer of the new comedy.

While possessing, perhaps, both less art and fire than the old satirical drama, produced in times of greater public freedom, the new comedy is generally reputed to have been superior in delicacy, regularity, and decorum. But although it represented the characters and manners of real life, yet in these characters and manners—to judge at least from the fragments which remain, and from the Latin imitations—there does not appear to have been much variety. There is always an old father, a lover, and a courtezan; as if formed on each other, like the Platonic and licentious lover in the Spanish romances of chivalry. “Their plots,” says Dryden, “were commonly a little girl, stolen or wandering from her parents, brought back unknown to the city,—there got with child by some one, who, by the help of his servant, cheats his father,—and when her time comes to cry Juno Lucina, one or other sees a little box or cabinet which was carried away with her, and so discovers her to her friends;—if some god do not prevent it, by coming down in a
[pg 98] machine, and taking the thanks of it to himself. By the plot you may guess much of the characters of the persons; an old father, who would willingly before he dies see his son well married; a debauched son, kind in his nature to his mistress, but miserably in want of money; and a servant, or slave, who has so much art as to strike in with him, and help to dupe his father; a braggadocio captain; a parasite; a lady of pleasure. As for the poor honest maid, on whom the story is built, and who ought to be one of the principal actors in the play, she is commonly mute in it. She has the breeding of the old Elizabeth way: which was, for maids to be seen and not to be heard.” Sometimes, however, her breeding appears in being heard and not seen; and Donatus remarks, that invocations of Juno behind the scenes were the only way in which the *severity* of the *Comœdia palliata* allowed young gentlewomen to be introduced. Were we to characterize the ancient drama by appellations of modern invention, it might be said, that the ancient comedy was what we call a comedy of character, and the modern a comedy of intrigue.

Nævius, while inventing plots of his own, had tried to introduce on the Roman stage the style of the *old* Greek comedy; but his dramas did not succeed, and the fate of their author deterred others from following his dangerous career. The government of Athens, which occupies a chief part in the old comedy, was the most popular of all administrations; and hence not only oratory but comedy claimed the right of ridiculing and exposing it. The first state in Greece became the subject of merriment. In one play, the whole body of the people was represented under the allegorical personage of an old doting driveller; and the pleasantry was not only tolerated but enjoyed by the members of the state itself. Cleon and Lamachus could not have repressed the satire of Aristophanes, as the Metelli checked the invectives of Nævius. Under pretence of patriotic zeal, the Greek comic writers spared no part of the public conduct,—councils, revenues, popular assemblies, judicial proceedings, or warlike enterprizes. Such exposure was a restraint on the ambition of individuals,—a matter of importance to a people jealous of its liberties. All this, however, was quite foreign to the more serious taste, and more aristocratic government, of the Romans, to their estimation of heroes and statesmen, to their respect for their legitimate chiefs, and for the dignity even of a Roman citizen. The profound reverence and proud affection which they entertained for all that exalted the honour of their country, and their extreme sensibility to its slightest disgrace, must have interdicted any exhibition, in which its glory was humbled, or its
[pg 99] misfortunes held up to mockery. They would not have laughed so heartily at the disasters of a Carthaginian, as the Athenians did at those of a Peloponnesian or Sicilian war. The disposition which led them to return thanks to Varro, after the battle of Cannæ, that he had not despaired of the republic, was very different from the temper which excited such contumelious laughter at the promoters of the Spartan war, and the advisers of the fatal expedition to Syracuse[225]. When the Roman people were seriously offended, the Tarpeian rock, and not the stage, was the spot selected for their vengeance.

Accordingly, Plautus found it most prudent to imitate the style of the new comedy, which had been brought to perfection, about half a century before his birth, by Menander. All his comedies, however, are not strictly formed on this model, as a few partake of the nature of the middle comedy: not that, like Nævius, he satirized the senators or consuls; but I have little doubt that many of his *dramatis personæ*, such as the miser and braggart captain, were originally caricatures of citizens of Athens. In borrowing from the Greek, he did not, like modern writers of comedy who wish to conceal their plagiarisms, vary the names of his characters, the scene of action, and other external circumstances, while the substance of the drama remained the same;

on the contrary, he preserved every circumstance which could tend to give his dramatic pieces a Greek air:—

> “Atque hoc poetæ faciunt in comœdiis;
> Omnes res gestas esse Athenis autumant,
> Quo illud vobis Græcum videatur magis.”

Plautus was the son of a freedman, and was born at Sarsina, a town in Umbria, about the year 525. He was called Plautus from his splay feet, a defect common among the Umbrians. Having turned his attention to the stage, he soon realized a considerable fortune by the popularity of his dramas; but by risking it in trade, or spending it, according others, on the splendid dresses which he wore as an actor, and theatrical amusements being little resorted to, on account of the famine
[pg 100] then prevailing at Rome, he was quickly reduced to such necessity as forced him to labour at a hand-mill for his daily support[226] an employment which at Rome, was the ordinary punishment of a worthless slave. Many of his plays were written in these unfavourable circumstances, and of course have not obtained all the perfection which might otherwise have resulted from his knowledge of life, and his long practice in the dramatic art.

Of the performances of Plautus, the first, in that alphabetical order in which, for want of a better, they are usually arranged, is,

Amphitryon.—Personal resemblances are a most fertile subject of comic incidents, and almost all nations have had their Amphitryon. The Athenians in particular gladly availed themselves of this subject, as it afforded an opportunity of throwing ridicule on the dull Bœotians. It is not certain, however, from what Greek author the play of Plautus was taken. Being announced as a tragi-comedy, some critics[227] have conjectured that it was most probably imitated from an Amphitryon mentioned by Athenæus,[228] which was the work of Rhinton, a poet of Tarentum, who wrote mock-tragedies and tragi-comedies styled *Rhintonica* or *Hilarotragœdiæ*. M. Schlegel, however, alleges that it was borrowed from a play of Epicharmus the Sicilian. The subjects indeed of the ancient Greek comedy, particularly in the hands of Epicharmus, its inventor, were frequently derived from mythology. Even in its maturity, these topics were not renounced, as appears from the titles of several lost pieces of Aristophanes and his contemporaries. Such fabulous traditions continued sometimes to occupy the scenes of the middle comedy, and it was not till the new was introduced that the sphere of the comic drama was confined to the representation of private and domestic life. Euripides also is said to have written a play entitled *Alcmena*, on the story of Amphitryon, but how far Plautus may have been indebted to him for his plot cannot be now ascertained. It is probable enough, however, that some of the serious parts may have been copied from the *Alcmena* of Euripides. The catastrophe of Plautus’s *Amphitryon* is brought about by a storm; and we learn from the *Rudens*, another play of Plautus, that a tempest was introduced by the Greek tragedian—

> “Non ventus fuit, verum Alcmena Euripidis.”

[pg 101] The Latin play is introduced by a prologue which is spoken by the God Mercury, and was explanatory to the audience of the circumstances preceding the opening of the piece, and the situation of the principal characters. The term *prologue* has been very arbitrarily used. In one sense it merely signified the induction to the dramatic action, which informed the spectator of what was necessary to be known for duly understanding it. Aristotle calls that part of a tragedy the prologue, which precedes the first song of the chorus.[229] In the Greek tragedies, the prologue was often a long introductory and narrative monologue. Sophocles, however, so *dialogued* this part of the drama, that it has no appearance of a contrivance to instruct, but seems a natural conversation of the *dramatis personæ*. Euripides, on the other hand, fell more into the style of the formal narrative prologue, since, before entering on the action or dialogue, one of the persons destined to bear a part in the drama frequently explained to the audience, in a continued discourse, what things seemed essential for understanding the piece. Sometimes, however, in the Greek tragedies, the speaker of this species of prologue is not a person of the drama. In general, these artificial prologues of explanatory narration are addressed directly to the spectators, and hence approach nearly to the prologue, in our acceptation of the term. The poets of the ancient comedy, as we see from Aristophanes, usually adopted, like Sophocles, the mode of explaining preliminary circumstances in the course of the action, whence it has been considered that the old Greek comedies have no prologue; and they certainly have none in the strict modern sense, though the method of Euripides has been employed to a certain degree in the *Wasps* and *Birds*, in the former of which Xanthias, interrupting the dialogue with Sosias, turns abruptly to the spectators, and unfolds the argument of the fable. The poets of the middle and new comedy, while departing from Aristophanes in many things, followed him in the form of the prologue; and, as they improved in refinement, interwove still closer the requisite exposition of the fable with its action. The Romans thus found among the Greeks, prologues in a continued narrative, and prologues where the exposition was mixed with the action. From these models they formed a new species, peculiar to themselves, which is entirely separated from the action of the drama, and which generally contains an explanation of circumstances and characters, with such gentle
[pg 102] recommendation of the piece as suited the purpose of the author. We shall find that the Latin prologues, dressed up in the form of narrative, sometimes preceded the dramatic induction of the action, and at other times, as in the *Miles Gloriosus*, followed it. The prologue of the *Mostellaria* is on the plan adopted by Aristophanes, and that of the *Cistellaria* is conformable to the practice of our own theatre. To other plays, such as the *Epidicus* and *Bacchides*, there were originally no

prologues, but they were prefixed after the death of the author, in order to explain the reasons for bringing them forward anew. It thus appears that in his prologues Plautus approached nearer to Euripides than to those comic writers whom in his argument and all other respects he chiefly followed. The prologues of Terence, again, seldom announce the subject. In the manner of the Greeks, his induction is laid in the first scene of the play, and the prologues seem chiefly intended to acknowledge the Greek original of his drama, and to explain matters personal to himself. They rather resemble the choruses of Aristophanes, which in the *Wasps* and other plays directly address the audience in favour of the poet, and complain of the unjust reception which his dramas occasionally experienced.

In the prologue to the *Amphitryon*, Plautus calls his play a tragi-comedy[230]; probably not so much that there is any thing tragical in the subject, (although the character of Alcmena is a serious one,) as, because it is of that mixed kind in which the highest as well as lowest characters are introduced. The plot is chiefly founded on the well-known mythological incident of Jupiter assuming the figure of Amphitryon, general of the Thebans, during his absence with the army, and by that means imposing on his wife Alcmena. The play opens while Jupiter is supposed to be with the object of his passion. Sosia, the servant of Amphitryon, who had been sent on before by his master, from the port to announce his victory and approach, is introduced on the stage, proceeding towards the palace of Amphitryon. While expressing his astonishment at the length of the night, he is met, in front of his master's house, by Mercury, who had assumed his form, and who, partly by blows and threats, and partly by leading him to doubt of his own identity, succeeds in driving him back. This gives Jupiter time to prosecute his amour, and he departs at dawn. The
[pg 103] improbable story related by Sosia is not believed by his master, who himself now advances towards his house, from which Alcmena comes forth, lamenting the departure of her supposed husband; but seeing Amphitryon, she expresses her surprise at his speedy return. The jealousy of Amphitryon is thus excited, and he quits the stage, in order to bring evidence that he had never till that time quitted his army. Jupiter then returns, and Amphitryon is afterwards refused access to his own house by Mercury, who pretends that he does not know him. At length Jupiter and Amphitryon are confronted. They are successively questioned as to the events of the late war by the pilot of the ship in which Amphitryon had returned. As Jupiter also stands this test of identity, the real Amphitryon is wrought up to such a pitch of rage and despair, that he resolves to wreak vengeance on his whole family, and is provoked even to utter blasphemies, by setting the gods at defiance. He is supposed immediately after this to have been struck down by lightning, as, in the next scene, Bromia, the attendant of Alcmena, rushes out from the house, alarmed at the tempest, and finds Amphitryon lying prostrate on the earth. When he has recovered, she announces to him that during the storm Alcmena had given birth to twins:—

"*Amph.* Ain' tu Geminos? *Brom.* Geminos. *Amph.* Dii me servent."

Jupiter then, *in propria persona*, reveals the whole mystery, and Amphitryon appears to be much flattered by the honour which had been paid him.

In this play the jealousy and perplexity of Amphitryon are well portrayed, and the whole character of Alcmena is beautifully drawn. She is represented as an affectionate wife, full of innocence and simplicity, and her distress at the suspicions of the real Amphitryon is highly interesting. The English translator of Plautus has remarked the great similarity of manners between her and Desdemona, while placed in similar circumstances. Both express indignation at being suspected, but love for their husbands makes them easily reconciled. The reader, however, feels that Amphitryon and Alcmena remain in an awkward situation at the conclusion of the piece. It must also be confessed, that the Roman dramatist has assigned a strange part to Jupiter Optimus Maximus, at whose festivals this play is said to have been usually performed; but, as Voltaire has remarked, "Il n'y a que ceux qui ne savent point combien les hommes agissent peu consequemment, qui puissent etre surpris, qu'on se moqua publiquement au theatre des memes dieux qu'on adorait dans les temples."

[pg 104] Mistakes are a most fruitful subject of comic incident, and never could there be such mistakes as those which arise from two persons being undistinguishable: but then, in order to give an appearance of verisimilitude on the stage, it was almost necessary that the play should be represented with masks, which could alone exhibit the perfect resemblance of the two Amphitryons and the two Sosias; and even with this advantage, such errors, in order to possess dramatic plausibility, must have been founded on some mythological tradition. The subject, therefore, is but an indifferent one for the modern stage. Accordingly, Ludovico Dolce, who first imitated this comedy in his play entitled *Marito*, has grossly erred in transporting the scene from Thebes to Padua, and assigning the parts of Jupiter and Amphitryon to Messer Muzio and Fabrizio, two Italian citizens, who were so similar in appearance, that the wife of one of them, though a sensible and virtuous woman, is deceived night and day, during her husband's absence, by the resemblance, and the deception is aided by the still more marvellous likeness of their domestics. In place of Jupiter appearing in the clouds, and justifying Alcmena, the Italian has introduced a monk, called Fra Girolamo, who is bribed to persuade the foolish husband that a spirit (Folletto) had one night transported him to Padua, during sleep, which satisfactorily accounts to him for the situation in which he finds his wife on his return home.

These absurdities have been in a great measure avoided in the imitation by Rotrou, who may be regarded as the father of the French drama, having first exploded the bad taste which pervades the pieces of Hardy. His comedy entitled *Les Deux Sosies*, is completely framed on the

Amphitryon of Plautus, only the prologue is spoken by the inveterate Juno, who declaims against her rivals, and enumerates the labours which she has in store for the son of Alcmena.

But by far the most celebrated imitation of Plautus is the *Amphitrion* of Moliere, who has managed with much delicacy a subject in itself not the most decorous. He has in general followed the steps of the Roman dramatist, but where he has departed from them, he has improved on the original. Instead of the dull and inconsistent prologue delivered by Mercury, which explains the subject of the piece, he has introduced a scene between Mercury and Night, (probably suggested by the Dialogues of Lucian between Mercury and the Sun on the same occasion,) in which Mercury announces the state of matters while requesting Night to prolong her stay on earth for the sake of Jupiter. At the commencement of the piece, Plautus has made Sosia repeat to himself
[pg 105] a very minute, though picturesque account of the victory of the Thebans, as preparatory to a proper description of it to Alcmena. This Moliere has formed into a sort of dialogued soliloquy between Sosia and his Lantern, which rehearses the answers anticipated from Alcmena, till the discourse is at length interrupted by the arrival of Mercury, when the speaker has lost himself among the manœuvres of the troops. In the Latin *Amphitryon*, Mercury threatens Sosia, and he replies to his rodomontade by puns and quibbles, which have been omitted by the French poet, who makes the spectators laugh by the excessive and ridiculous terror of Sosia, and not by pleasantries inconsistent with his feelings and situation. Moliere has copied from Plautus the manner in which Sosia is gradually led to doubt of his own identity: his consequent confusion of ideas has been closely imitated, as also the ensuing scenes of the quarrel and reconciliation between Jupiter and Alcmena. He has added the part of Cleanthes, the wife of Sosia, suggested to him by a line put into the mouth of Sosia by Plautus—

“Quid me expectatum non rere amicæ meæ venturum.”

It was certainly ingenious to make the adventures of the slave a parody on those of his master, and this new character produces an agreeable scene between her and Mercury, who is little pleased with the caresses of this antiquated charmer. On the other hand, the French dramatist has omitted the examination of the double Amphitryons, and nearly introduces them in the presence of two Thebans: Amphitryon brings his friends to avenge him, by assaulting Jupiter, when that god appears in the clouds and announces the future birth of Hercules. Through the whole comedy, Moliere has given a different colour to the behaviour of Jupiter, from that thrown over it by Plautus. In the Latin play he assumes quite the character of the husband; but with Moliere he is more of a lover and gallant, and pays Alcmena so many amorous compliments, that she exclaims,

“Amphitrion, en verité,
Vous vous moquez de tenir ce langage!”

Moliere evidently felt that Alcmena and Amphitryon were placed in an awkward situation, in spite of the assurances of Jupiter—

“Alcmene est toute a toi, quelque soin qu’on employe;
Et ce doit a tes feux etre un objet bien doux,
De voir, que pour lui plaire, il n’est point d’autre voie,
Que de paraitre son epoux.
Sosie. Le seigneur Jupiter sait dorer sa pilule.”

[pg 106] In these, and several other lines, Moliere has availed himself of the old French play of Rotrou. The lively expression of Sosia,

“Le veritable Amphitryon est l’Amphitryon ou l’on dine,”

which has passed into a sort of proverb, has been suggested by a similar phrase of Rotrou’s Sosia —

“Point point d’Amphitryon ou l’on ne dine point;”

and the lines,

“J’etais venu, je vous jure,
Avant que je fusse arrivé,”

are nearly copied from Rotrou’s

“J’etais chez-nous avant mon arrivé;”

and Sosia’s boast, in the older French play,

“Il m’est conforme en tout—il est grand, il est fort,”

has probably suggested to Moliere the lines,

“Des pieds, jusqu’ a la tete il est comme moi fait,
Beau, l’air noble, bienpris, les manieres charmantes.”

The *Amphitrion* of Moliere was published in 1668, so that Dryden, in his imitation of Plautus’s

Amphitryon, which first appeared in 1690, had an opportunity of also availing himself of the French piece. But, even with this assistance, he has done Plautus less justice than his predecessor. He has sometimes borrowed the scenes and incidents of Moliere; but has too frequently given us ribaldry in the low characters, and bombast in the higher, instead of the admirable grace and liveliness of the French dramatist. His comedy commences earlier than either the French or Latin play. Phœbus makes his appearance at the opening of the piece. The first arrival of Jupiter in the shape of Amphitryon is then represented, apparently in order to introduce Phædra, the attendant of Alcmena, exacting a promise from her mistress, before she knew, who had arrived, that they should that night be bed-fellows as usual since Amphitryon's absence. To this Phædra, Dryden has assigned an amour with Mercury, to the great jealousy of Sosia's wife, Bromia; and has mixed up the whole play with pastoral dialogues and *rondeaus*, to
[pg 107] which, as he informs us in his dedication, "the numerous choir of fair ladies gave so just an applause." The scenes of a higher description are those which have been best managed. The latest editor, indeed, of the works of Dryden, thinks that in these parts he has surpassed both the French and Roman dramatist. "The sensation to be expressed," he remarks, "is not that of sentimental affection, which the good father of Olympus was not capable of feeling; but love of that grosser and subordinate kind, which prompted Jupiter in his intrigues, has been expressed by none of the ancient poets in more beautiful verse, than that in which Dryden has clothed it, in the scenes between Jupiter and Alcmena." Milbourne, who afterwards so violently attacked the English poet, highly compliments him on the success of this effort of his dramatic muse—

> "Not Phœbus could with gentler words pursue
> His flying Daphne; not the morning dew
> Falls softer, than the words of amorous Jove,
> When melting, dying, for Alcmena's love."

The character, however, of Alcmena is, I think, less interesting in the English than in the Latin play. She is painted by Plautus as delighted with the glory of her husband. In the second scene of the second act, after a beautiful complaint on account of his absence, she consoles herself with the thoughts of his military renown, and concludes with an eulogy on valour, which would doubtless be highly popular in a Roman theatre during the early ages of the Republic—

> —— "Virtus præmium est optimum,
> Virtus omnibus rebus anteit profecto.
> Libertas, salus, vita, res, parenteis,
> Patria, et prognati tutantur, servantur:
> Virtus omnia in se habet; omnia adsunt bona, quem pen'est virtus."

Dryden's Alcmena is represented as quite different in her sentiments: She exclaims, on parting with Jupiter,

> "Curse on this honour, and this public fame!
> Would you had less of both, and more of love!"

Lady M. W. Montague gives a curious account, in one of her letters, of a German play on the subject of Amphitryon, which she saw acted at Vienna.—"As that subject had been already handled by a Latin, French, and English poet, I was curious to see what an Austrian author could make of it. I understand enough of that language to comprehend the greatest part of it; and,
[pg 108] besides, I took with me a lady that had the goodness to explain to me every word. I thought the house very low and dark; but the comedy admirably recompensed that defect. I never laughed so much in my life. It began with Jupiter falling in love out of a peep-hole in the clouds, and ended with the birth of Hercules. But what was most pleasant was, the use Jupiter made of his metamorphosis; for you no sooner saw him under the figure of Amphitryon, but, instead of flying to Alcmena with the raptures Dryden puts into his mouth, he sends for Amphitryon's tailor, and cheats him of a laced coat, and his banker of a bag of money—a Jew of a diamond ring, and bespeaks a great supper in his name; and the greatest part of the comedy turns upon poor Amphitryon's being tormented by these people for their debts. Mercury uses Sosia in the same manner; but I could not easily pardon the liberty the poet had taken of larding his play with not only indecent expressions, but such gross words as I do not think our mob would suffer from a mountebank."

In nothing can the manners of different ages and countries be more distinctly traced, than in the way in which the same subject is treated on the stage. In Plautus, may be remarked the military enthusiasm and early rudeness of the Romans—in the *Marito* of L. Dolce, the intrigues of the Italians, and the constant interposition of priests and confessors in domestic affairs—in Dryden, the libertinism of the reign of Charles the Second—and in Moliere, the politeness and refinement of the court of Louis.

Asinaria, is translated from the Greek of Demophilus, a writer of the Middle comedy. The subject is the trick put on an ass-driver by two roguish slaves, in order to get hold of the money which he brought in payment of some asses he had purchased from their master, that they might employ it in supplying the extravagance of their master's son. The old man, however, is not the dupe in this play: On the contrary, he is a confederate in the plot, which was chiefly devised against his wife, who, having brought her husband a great portion, imperiously governed his house and family. By this means the youth is restored to the possession of a mercenary mistress, from whom he had been excluded by a more wealthy rival. The father stipulates, as a reward for the part which he

had acted in this stratagem, that he also should have a share in the favours of his son's mistress; and the play concludes with this old wretch being detected by his wife, carousing at a nocturnal banquet, a wreath of flowers on his head, with his son and the courtezan. It would appear, from the concluding address to the spectators, that neither the moral sense of the author, nor of his
[pg 109] audience, was very strong or correct, as the bystanders on the stage, so far from condemning these abandoned characters, declare that the most guilty of the three had done nothing new or surprising, or more than what was customary:

"*Grex.* Hic senex, si quid, clam uxorem, suo animo fecit volup,
Neque novum, neque mirum fecit, nec secus quam alii solent:
Nec quisqua'st tam in genio duro; nec tam firmo pectore,
Quin ubi quicquam occasionis sit, sibi faciat bene."

Lucilius, while remarking in one of his fragments, that the Chremes of Terence had preserved a just medium in morals by his obliging demeanour towards his son, had ample grounds for observing, that the Demænetus of Plautus had run into an extreme—

"Chremes in medium, in summum ire Ademænetus[231]."

However exceptionable in point of morals, this play possesses much comic vivacity and interest of character. The courtezan and the slaves are sketched with spirit and freedom, and the rapacious disposition of the female dealer in slave-girls, is well developed.

It is curious that this immoral comedy should have been so frequently acted in the Italian convents. In particular, a translation in *terza rima* was represented in the monastery of St Stefano at Venice, in 1514[232]. It was not of a nature to be often imitated by modern writers, but Moliere, who has borrowed so many of the plots of other plays of Plautus, has extracted from this drama several situations and ideas. Cleæreta, in the third scene of the first Act of the *Asinaria*, gives, as her advice, to a gallant—

"Neque ille scit quid det, quid damni faciat: illi rei studet;
Vult placere sese amicæ, vult mihi, vult pedissequæ,
Vult famulis, vult etiam ancillis; et quoque catulo meo
Sublanditur novus amator."

In like manner, in the *Femmes Savantes*, Henriette, while counselling Clitandre to be complaisant, says—

"Un amant fait sa cour ou s'attache son cœur,
Il veut de tout le monde y gagner la faveur;
Et pour n'avoir personne a sa flamme contraire,
Jusqu'au chien du logis il s'efforce de plaire."

Aulularia.—It is not known from what Greek author this play has been taken; but there can be no
[pg 110] doubt that it had its archetype in the Greek drama. The festivals of Ceres and Bacchus, which in their origin were innocent institutions, intended to celebrate the blessings of harvest and vintage, having degenerated by means of priestcraft, became schools of superstition and debauchery. From the adventures and intrigues which occurred at the celebration of religious mysteries, the comic poets of Greece frequently drew the incidents of their dramas[233], which often turned on damsels having been rendered, on such occasions, the mothers of children, without knowing who were the fathers. In like manner, the intrigue of the *Aulularia* has its commencement in the daughter of Euclio being violated during the celebration of the mysteries of Ceres, without being aware from whom she had received the injury. The *Aulularia*, however, is principally occupied with the display of the character of a Miser. No vice has been so often pelted with the good sentences of moralists, or so often ridiculed on the stage, as avarice; and of all the characters that have been there represented, that of the miser in the *Aulularia* of Plautus, is perhaps the most entertaining and best supported. Comic dramas have been divided into those of intrigue and character, and the *Aulularia* is chiefly of the latter description. It is so termed from *Aula*, or *Olla*, the diminutive of which is *Aulula*, signifying the little earthen pot that contained a treasure which had been concealed by his grandfather, but had been discovered by Euclio the miser, who is the principal character of the play. The prologue is spoken by the *Lar Familiaris* of the house; and as the play has its origin in the discovery of a treasure deposited under a hearth, the introduction of this imaginary Being, if we duly consider the superstitions of the Romans, was happy and appropriate. The account given by the *Lar* of the successive generations of misers, is also well imagined, as it convinces us that Euclio was a genuine miser, and of the true breed. The household god had disclosed the long-concealed treasure, as a reward for the piety of Euclio's daughter, who presented him with offerings of frankincense and of wine, which, however, it is not very probable the miser's daughter could have procured, especially before the discovery of the treasure. The story of the precious deposit, of which the spectators could not possibly have been informed without this supernatural interposition, being thus related, we are introduced at once to the knowledge of the principal character, who, having found the treasure, employs himself in
[pg 111] guarding it, and lives in continual apprehension, lest it should be discovered that he possesses it. Accordingly, he is brought on the stage driving off his servant, that she may not spy him while visiting this hoard, and afterwards giving directions of the strictest economy. He then leaves home on an errand very happily imagined—an attendance at a public distribution of money to the poor. Megadorus now proposes to marry his daughter, and Euclio comically enough supposes

that he has discovered something concerning his newly acquired wealth; but on his offering to take her without a portion, he is tranquillized, and agrees to the match. Knowing the disposition of his intended father-in-law, Megadorus sends provisions to his house, and also cooks, to prepare a marriage-feast, but the miser turns them out, and keeps what they had brought. At length his alarm for discovery rises to such a height, that he hides his treasure in a grove, consecrated to Sylvanus, which lay beyond the walls of the city. While thus employed, he is observed by the slave of Lyconides, the young man who had violated the miser's daughter. Euclio coming to recreate himself with the sight of his gold, finds that it is gone. Returning home in despair, he is met by Lyconides, who, hearing of the projected nuptials between his uncle and the miser's daughter, now apologizes for his conduct; but the miser applies all that he says concerning his daughter to his lost treasure. This play is unfortunately mutilated, and ends with the slave of Lyconides confessing to his master that he has found the miser's hoard, and offering to give it up as the price of his freedom. It may be presumed, however, that, in the original, Lyconides got possession of the treasure, and by its restoration to Euclio, so far conciliated his favour, that he obtained his daughter in marriage. This conclusion, accordingly, has been adopted by those who have attempted to finish the comedy in the spirit of the Latin dramatist. It is completed on this plan by Thornton, the English translator of Plautus, and by Antonius Codrus Urceus, a professor in the University of Bologna, who died in the year 1500. Urceus has also made the miser suddenly change his nature, and liberally present his new son-in-law with the restored treasure.

The restless inquietude of Euclio, in concealing his gold in many different places—his terror on seeing the preparations for the feast, lest the wine brought in was meant to intoxicate him, that he might be robbed with greater facility—his dilemma at being obliged to miss the distribution to the poor—are all admirable traits of extreme and habitual avarice. Even his recollection of the expense of a rope, when, in despair at the loss of his treasure, he resolves to hang himself,
[pg 112] though a little overdone, is sufficiently characteristic. But while the part of a confirmed miser has been comically and strikingly represented in these touches, it is stretched in others beyond all bounds of probability. When Euclio entreats his female servant to spare the cobwebs—when it is said, that he complains of being pillaged if the smoke issue from his house—and that he preserves the parings of his nails—we feel this to be a species of hoarding which no miser could think of or enjoy[234].

One of the earliest imitations of the *Aulularia* was, *La Sporta*, a prose Italian comedy, printed at Florence in 1543, under the name of Giovam-Battista Gelli, but attributed by some to Machiavel. It is said, that the great Florentine historian left this piece, in an imperfect state, in the hands of his friend Bernardino di Giordano of Florence, in whose house his comedies were sometimes represented, whence it passed into the possession of Gelli, a writer of considerable humour, who prepared it for the press; and, according to a practice not unfrequent in Italy at different periods, published it as his own production[235]. The play is called *Sporta*, from the basket in which the treasure was contained. The plot and incidents in Plautus have been closely followed, in so far as was consistent with modern Italian manners; and where they varied, the circumstances, as well as names, have been adapted by the author to the customs and ideas of his country. Euclio is called Ghirorgoro, and Megadorus, Lapo; the former being set up as a satire on avarice, the latter as a pattern of proper economy.

The principal plot of *The case is altered*, a comedy attributed to Ben Jonson, has been taken, as
[pg 113] shall be afterwards shown from the *Captivi* of Plautus; but the character of Jaques is more closely formed on that of Euclio, than any miser on the modern stage. Jaques having purloined the treasure of a French Lord Chamont, whose steward he had been, and having also stolen his infant daughter, fled with them to Italy. The girl, when she grew up, being very beautiful, had many suitors; whence her reputed father suspects it is discovered that he possesses hidden wealth, in the same manner as Euclio does in the scene with Megadorus. We have a representation of his excessive anxiety lest he lose this treasure—his concealment of it—and his examination of Juniper, the cobbler, whom he suspects to have stolen it; which corresponds to Euclio's examination of Strobilus. Most other modern dramatists have made their miser in love; but in the breast of Jaques all passions are absorbed in avarice, which is exhibited to us not so much in ridiculous instances of minute domestic economy, as in absolute adoration of his gold:

> "I'll take no leave, sweet prince, great emperor!
> But see thee every minute, king of kings!"

It is thus he feasts his senses with his treasure: and the very ground in which it is hidden is accounted hallowed:

> "This is the palace, where the god of gold
> Shines like the sun of sparkling majesty!"

But the most celebrated imitation of the *Aulularia* is Moliere's *Avare*, one of the best and most wonderful imitations ever produced. Almost nothing is of the French dramatist's own invention. Scenes have been selected by him from a number of different plays, in various languages, which have no relation to each other; but every thing is so well connected, that the whole appears to have been invented for this single comedy. Though chiefly indebted to Plautus, he has not so closely followed his original as in the *Amphitryon*. One difference, which materially affects the plots of the two plays and characters of the misers, is, that Euclio was poor till he unexpectedly found the treasure. He was not known to be rich, and lived in constant dread of his wealth being

discovered. When any thing was said about riches, he applied it to himself; and when well received or caressed by any one, he supposed that he was ensnared. Harpagon, on the other hand, had amassed a fortune, and was generally known to possess it, which gives an additional zest to the humour, as we thus enter into the merriment of his family and neighbours; whereas the penury of Euclio could scarcely have appeared unreasonable to the bystanders, who were not
[pg 114] in the secret of the acquired treasure. Moliere has also made his miser in love, or at least resolved to marry, and amuses us with his anxiety, in believing himself under the necessity of giving a feast to his intended bride; which is still better than Euclio's consternation at the supper projected by his intended son-in-law. Euclio is constantly changing the place where he conceals his casket; Harpagon allows it to remain, but is chiefly occupied with its security. The idea, however, of so much incident turning on a casket, is not so happily imagined in the French as in the Latin comedy; since, in the latter, it was the whole treasure of which the miser was possessed, and there was at that time no mode of lending it out safely and to advantage. Harpagon gives a collation, but orders the fragments to be sent back to those who had provided it; Euclio retains the provisions, which had been procured at another's expense. From the restraint imposed by modern manners, and the circumstance of Harpagon being known to be rich, Moliere has been forced to omit the amusing dilemmas in which Euclio is placed with regard to his attendance on the distributions to the poor. In recompense, he has wonderfully improved the scene about the dowry, as also that in which the miser applies what is said concerning his daughter to his lost treasure; and, on the whole, he has displayed the passion of avarice in more of the incidents and relations of domestic life than the Latin poet. Plautus had remained satisfied with exhibiting a miser, who deprived himself of all the comforts of life, to watch night and day over an unproductive treasure; but Moliere went deeper into the mind. He knew that avarice is accompanied with selfishness, and hardness of heart, and falsehood, and mistrust, and usury; and accordingly, all these vices and evil passions are amalgamated with the character of the French miser.

The *Aulularia* being a play of character, I have been led to compare the most celebrated imitations of it rather in the exhibition of the miserly character than in the incidents of the piece. Many of the latter which occur in the *Avare*, have not been borrowed from Plautus, yet are not of Moliere's invention. Thus he has added from the *Pedant Joué* of Cyrano Bergerac that part of the plot which consists in the love of the miser and his son for the same woman, as also that which relates to Valere, a young gentleman in love with the miser's daughter, who had got into his service in disguise, and who, when the miser lost his money, which his son's servant had stolen, was accused by another servant of having purloined it. Moliere's notion of the miser's prodigal son borrowing money from a usurer, and the usurer afterwards proving to be his father, is from
[pg 115] *La Belle Plaideuse*, a comedy of Bois-Robert. In an Italian piece, *Le Case Svaligiate*, prior to the time of Moliere, and in the harlequin taste, Scapin persuades Pantaloon that the young beauty with whom he is captivated returns his love, that she sets a particular value on old age, and dislikes youthful admirers, whence Pantaloon is induced to give his purse to the flatterer. Frosine attacks the vanity of Harpagon in the same manner, but he, though not unmoved by the flattery, retains his money. Moliere has availed himself of a number of other Italian dramas of the same description for scattered remarks and situations. The name of Harpagon has been suggested to him by the continuation of Codrus Urceus, where Strobilus says that the masters of the present day are so avaricious, that they may be called Harpies or Harpagons:

> "Tenaces nimium dominos nostra ætas
> Tulit, quos Harpagones vocare soleo."

I do not know where Moliere received the hint of the *denouement* of his piece. The conclusion of the *Aulularia*, as already mentioned, is not extant, but it could not have been so improbable and inartificial as the discovery of Valere and Marianne for the children of Thomas D'Alburci, who, under the name of Anselme, had courted the miser's daughter.

Shadwell, Fielding, and Goldoni, enjoyed the advantage of studying Moliere's Harpagon for their delineations of Goldingham, Lovegold, and Ottavio. In the miser of Shadwell there is much indecency indeed of his own invention, and some disgusting representations of city vulgarity and vice; but still he is hardly entitled to the praise of so much originality as he claims in his impudent preface.—"The foundation of this play," says he, "I took from one of Moliere's, called L'Avare, but that having too few persons, and too little action for an English theatre, I added to both so much, that I may call more than half of this play my own; and I think I may say, without vanity, that Moliere's part of it has not suffered in my hands. Nor did I ever know a French comedy made use of by the worst of our poets that was not bettered by them. It is not barrenness of art or invention makes us borrow from the French, but laziness; and *this* was the occasion of my making use of *L'Avare*."

Fielding's *Miser*, the only one of his comedies which does him credit, is a much more agreeable play than Shadwell's. The earlier scenes are a close imitation of Moliere, but the concluding ones are somewhat different, and the *denouement* is perhaps improved. Mariana is in a great measure a new character, and those of the servants are rendered more prominent and important than in the French original.

[pg 116] The miser Ottavio, in Goldoni's *Vero Amico*, is entirely copied from Plautus and Moliere. In the Italian play, however, the character is in a great measure episodical, and the principal plot, which gives its title to the piece, and corresponds with that of Diderot's *Fils Naturel*, has been invented by the Italian dramatist.

On the whole, Moliere has succeeded best in rendering the passion of avarice hateful: Plautus and Goldoni have only made it ridiculous. The profound and poetical avarice of Jaques possesses something plaintive in its tone, which almost excites our sympathy, and never our laughter; he is represented as a worshipper of gold, somewhat as an old Persian might be of the sun, and he does not raise our contempt by the absurdities of domestic economy. But Harpagon is thoroughly detestable, and is in fact detested by his neighbours, domestics, and children. All these dramatists are accused of having exhibited rather an allegorical representation of avarice, than the living likeness of a human Being influenced by that odious propensity. "Plautus," says Hurd, "and also Moliere, offended in this, that for the picture of the avaricious man they presented us with a fantastic unpleasing draught of the passion of avarice—I call it a fantastic draught, because it hath no archetype in nature, and it is farther an unpleasing one; from being the delineation of a simple passion, unmixed, it wants

'The lights and shades, whose well accorded strife
Gives all the strength and colour of our life.'"

This may in general be true, as there are certainly few unmingled passions; but I suspect that avarice so completely engrosses the soul, that a simple and unmixed delineation of it is not remote from nature. "The Euclio of Plautus," says King, in his *Anecdotes*, "the Avare of Moliere, and Miser of Shadwell, have been all exceeded by persons who have existed within my own knowledge[236]."

Bacchides:—is so called from two sisters of the name of Bacchis, who are the courtezans in this play. In a prologue, which is supposed to be spoken by Silenus, mounted on an ass, it is said to be taken from a Greek comedy by Philemon. This information, however, cannot be implicitly relied
[pg 117] on, as the prologue was not written in the time of Plautus, and is evidently an addition of a comparatively recent date. Some indeed have supposed that it was prefixed by Petrarch; but at all events the following lines could not have been anterior to the conquest of Greece by the Romans:—

"Samos quæ terra sit, nota est omnibus:
Nam maria, terras, monteis, atque insulas
Vostræ legiones reddidere pervias."

The leading incident in this play—a master's folly and inadvertence counteracting the deep-laid scheme of a slave to forward his interest, has been employed by many modern dramatists for the groundwork of their plots; as we find from the *Inavertito* of Nicolo Barbieri, sirnamed Beltramo, the *Amant Indiscret* of Quinault, Moliere's *Etourdi*, and Dryden's *Sir Martin Mar-all*.

The third scene of the third act of this comedy, where the father of Pistoclerus speaks with so much indulgence of the follies of youth, has been imitated in Moliere's *Fourberies de Scapin*, and the fifth scene of the fourth act has suggested one in *Le Marriage Interrompu*[237], by Cailhava. If it could be supposed that Dante had read Plautus, the commencement of Lydus' soliloquy before the door of Bacchis, might be plausibly conjectured to have suggested that thrilling inscription over the gate of hell, in the third Canto of the *Inferno*—

"Pandite, atque aperite propere januam hanc Orci, obsecro!
Nam equidem haud aliter esse duco; quippe cui nemo advenit,
Nisi quem spes reliquere omnes ——

Per me si va nella città dolente:
Per me si va nell eterno dolore:
Per me si va tra la perduta gente.
* * * * * *
Lasciate ogni speranza, voi, che entrate."

Captivi.—The subject and plot of the *Captivi* are of a different description from those of Plautus' other comedies. No female characters are introduced; and, as it is said in the epilogue, or concluding address to the spectators,

—— "Ad pudicos mores facta hæc fabula est:
Neque in hâc subagitationes sunt, ullave amatio,
Nec pueri suppositio, nec argenti circumductio;
Neque ubi amans adolescens scortum liberet, clam suum patrem."

Though no females are introduced in it, the *Captivi* is the most tender and amiable of Plautus'
[pg 118] plays, and may be regarded as of a higher description than his other comedies, since it hinges on paternal affection and the fidelity of friendship. Many of the situations are highly touching, and exhibit actions of generous magnanimity, free from any mixture of burlesque. It has indeed been considered by some critics as the origin of that class of dramas, which, under the title of *Comedies Larmoyantes*, was at one time so much admired and so fashionable in France[238], and in which wit and humour, the genuine offspring of Thalia, are superseded by domestic sentiment and pathos.

Hegio, an Ætolian gentleman, had two sons, one of whom, when only four years old, was carried

off by a slave, and sold by him in Elis. A war having subsequently broken out between the Elians and Ætolians, Hegio's other son was taken captive by the Elians. The father, with a view of afterwards ransoming his son, by an exchange, purchased an Elian prisoner, called Philocrates, along with his servant Tyndarus; and the play opens with the master, Philocrates, personating his slave, while the slave, Tyndarus, assumes the character of his master. By this means Tyndarus remains a prisoner under his master's name, while Hegio is persuaded to send the true Philocrates, under the name of Tyndarus, to Elis, in order to effect the exchange of his son. The deception, however, is discovered by Hegio before the return of Philocrates; and the father, fearing that he had thus lost all hope of ransoming his child, condemns Tyndarus to labour in the mines. In these circumstances, Philocrates returns from Elis with Hegio's son, and also brings along with him the fugitive slave, who had stolen his other son in infancy. It is then discovered that Tyndarus is this child, who, having been sold to the father of Philocrates, was appointed by him to wait on his son, and had been gradually admitted to his young master's confidence and friendship.

There has been a great dispute among critics and commentators, whether the dramatic unities have been strictly observed in this comedy. M. De Coste, in the preface to his French translation of the *Captivi*, maintains, that the unities of place, and time, and action, have been closely attended to. Lessing, who translated the play into German, adopted the opinion of De Coste with regard to the observance of the unities, and he has farther pronounced it the most perfect comedy that, in his time, had yet been represented on the stage[239]. A German critic, whose letter
[pg 119] addressed to Lessing is published in that author's works[240], has keenly opposed these opinions, discussing at considerable length the question of the unities of action, time, and place, as also pointing out many supposed inconsistencies and improbabilities in the conduct of the drama. He objects, in point of verisimilitude, to the long and numerous *aparts*—the soliloquies of the parasite, which begin the first three acts,—the frequent mention of the market-places and streets of Rome, while the scene is laid in a town of Greece,—and the sudden as well as unaccountable appearance of Stalagmus, the fugitive slave, at the end of the drama. The most serious objection, however, is that which relates to the violation of the dramatic unity of time. The scene is laid in Calydon, the capital of Ætolia; and, at the end of the second act, Philocrates proceeds from that city to Elis, transacts there a variety of affairs, and returns before the play is concluded. Between these two places the distance is fifty miles; and in going from one to the other it was necessary to cross the bay of Corinth. It is therefore impossible (contends this critic,) that De Coste can be accurate in maintaining that the duration of the drama is only seven or eight hours. Allowing the poet, however, the greatest poetical license, and giving for his play the extended period of twenty-four hours, it is scarcely possible that the previous parts of the drama could have been gone through, and the long voyage accomplished, in this space of time. But it farther appears, that Plautus himself did not wish to claim this indulgence, and intended to crowd the journey and all the preceding dramatic incidents into twelve hours at most. He evidently means that the action should be understood as commencing with the morning: Hegio says, in the second scene of the first act,

> "Ego ibo ad fratrem, ad alios captivos meos,
> Visum ne nocte hâc quippiam turbaverint;"

and it is evident that the action terminates with the evening meal, the preparations for which conclude the fourth act. To all this Lessing replied, that there was no reason to suppose that the scene was laid in Calydon, or that the journey was made to the town of Elis, and that it might easily have been accomplished within the time prescribed by the dramatic rule of unities, if nearer points of the Ætolian and Elian territories be taken than their capitals.

Some of the characters in the *Captivi* are very beautifully drawn. Hegio is an excellent
[pg 120] representation of a respectable rich old citizen: He is naturally a humane good-humoured man, but his disposition is warped by excess of paternal tenderness. There is not in any of the comedies of Plautus, a more agreeable and interesting character than Tyndarus: and no delineation can be more pleasing than that of his faithful attachment to Philocrates, by whom he was in return implicitly trusted, and considered rather in the light of a friend than a slave. In this play, as in most others of Plautus, the parasite is a character somewhat of an episodical description: He goes about prowling for a supper, and is associated to the main subject of the piece only by the delight which he feels at the prospect of a feast, to honour the return of Hegio's son. The parasites of Plautus are almost as deserving a dissertation as Shakspeare's clowns. Parasite, as is well known, was a name originally applied in Greece to persons devoted to the service of the gods, and who were appointed for the purpose of keeping the consecrated provisions of the temples. Diodorus of Sinope, as quoted by Athenæus[241], after speaking of the dignity of the sacred parasites of Hercules, (who was himself a noted *gourmand*,) mentions that the rich, in emulation of this demi-god, chose as followers persons called parasites, who were not selected for their virtues or talents, but were remarkable for extravagant flattery to their superiors, and insolence to those inferiors who approached the persons of their patrons. This was the character which came to be represented on the stage. We learn from Athenæus[242], that a parasite was introduced in one of his plays by Epicharmus, the founder of the Greek comedy. The parasite of this ancient dramatist lay at the feet of the rich, eat the offals from their tables, and drank the dregs of their cups. He speaks of himself as of a person ever ready to dine abroad when invited, and when any one is to be married, to go to his house without an invitation—to pay for his good cheer by exciting the merriment of the company, and to retire as soon as he had eat and drunk sufficiently, without caring whether or not he was lighted out by the slaves[243]. In the

most ancient comedies, however, this character was not denominated parasite, and was first so called in the plays of Araros, the son of Aristophanes, and one of the earliest authors of the middle comedy. Antiphanes, a dramatist of the same class, has given a very full description of the
[pg 121] vocation of a parasite. The part, however, did not become extremely common till the introduction of the new comedy, when Diphilus, whose works were frequently imitated on the Roman stage, particularly distinguished himself by his delineation of the parasitical character[244]. In the Greek theatre, the part was usually represented by young men, dressed in a black or brown garb, and wearing masks expressive of malignant gaiety. They carried a goblet suspended round their waists, probably lest the slaves of their patrons should fill to them in too small cups; and also a vial of oil to be used at the bath, which was a necessary preparation before sitting down to table, for which the parasite required to be always ready at a moment's warning[245].

It was thus, too, that the character was represented on the Roman stage; and it would farther appear, that the parasites, in the days of Plautus, carried with them a sort of Joe Miller, as a manual of wit, with which they occasionally refreshed their vivacity. Thus the parasite, in the *Stichus*, says,

> "Ibo intro ad libros, et discam de dictis melioribus;"

and again—

> "Libros inspexi, tam confido, quam potest,
> Me meum obtenturum ridiculis meis."

The parasite naturally became a leading character of the Roman stage. In spite of the pride and boasted national independence of its citizens, the whole system of manners at Rome was parasitical. The connection between patron and client, which was originally the cordial intercourse of reciprocal services, soon became that of haughty superiority on the one side, and sordid adulation on the other. Every client was in fact the parasite of some patrician, whose litter he often followed like a slave, conforming to all his caprices, and submitting to all his insults, for the privilege of being placed at the lowest seat of the patron's table, and there repaying this indelicate hospitality by the most servile flattery. On the stage, the principal use of the parasite was to bring out the other characters from the canvass. Without Gnatho, the Thraso of Terence would have possessed less confidence; and without his flatterer, Pyrgopolinices would never have recollected breaking an elephant's thigh by a blow of his fist.

The parasite, in the *Captivi*, may be considered as a fair enough representative of his brethren in
[pg 122] the other plays of Plautus. He submits patiently to all manner of ignominious treatment[246]—his spirits rise and sink according as his prospects of a feast become bright or clouded—he speaks a great deal in soliloquies, in which he talks much of the jests by which he attempted to recommend himself as a guest at the feasts of the Great, but we are not favoured with any of these jests. In such soliloquies, too, he rather expresses what would justly be thought of him by others, than what even a parasite was likely to say of himself.

The parasite is not a character which has been very frequently represented on the modern stage. It is not one into which an Italian audience, who are indifferent to good cheer, would heartily enter. Accordingly, the parasite is not a common character in the native drama of Italy, and is chiefly exhibited in the old comedies of Ariosto and Aretine, which are directly imitated from the plays of Plautus or Terence; but even in them this character does not precisely coincide with the older and more genuine school of parasites. Ligurio, who is called the parasite in the *Mandragora* of Machiavel, rather corresponds to the intriguing slave than to the parasite of the Roman drama; or at least he resembles the more modern parasites, who, like the Phormio of Terence, ingratiated themselves with their patrons by serviceable roguery, rather than by flattery. Ipocrito, who, in Aretine's comedy of that name, is also styled the parasite, is a sort of Tartuffe, with charitable and religious maxims constantly in his mouth. He does not insinuate himself into the confidence of his patrons by a gaping admiration of their foolish sayings, but by extolling their virtues, and smoothing over their vices; and so far from being treated with any sort of contumely, he is held in high consideration, and interposes in all domestic arrangements.

It is still more difficult to find a true parasite on the English stage. Sir John Falstaff, though something of a parasite, is as original as he is inimitable. Lazarillo, the hungry courtier in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Woman Hater*, and Justice Greedy, in Massinger's *New Way to Pay Old Debts*, to whom Sir Giles Overreach gives the command of the kitchen, and absolute authority there, in respect of the entertainment, are rather epicures in constant quest of delicacies, than hungry parasites, who submit to any indignity for the sake of a meal. Lazarillo's whole intrigue consists of schemes for being invited to dine where there was an umbrana's head, and we are told that

[pg 123] —— "He hath a courtly kind of hunger,
> And doth hunt more for novelty than plenty;"

and Justice Greedy's delight is placed in rich canary, a larded pheasant, or a red deer baked in puff paste. Mosca, in Ben Jonson's *Volpone*, who grasps at presents made to him by the legacy-hunters of his patron, and who at length attempts to defraud the patron himself, is a parasite of infinitely greater artifice and villainy than any of those in Plautus; and in the opinion of the late editor of Jonson, outweighs the aggregate merit of all Plautus's parasites. Colax, who, in the

Muses' Looking-Glass of Randolph, chimes in with the sentiments of each character, approving, by an immense variety of subtle arguments, every extreme of vice and folly, appears to flatter all those allegorical representations of the passions exhibited in this drama, rather from courtesy than want. He tells us, indeed, that

> "'Tis gold gives Flattery all her eloquence;"

but this part of his character is not brought prominently forward, nor is he represented as a glutton or epicure. Perhaps the character which comes nearest to the parasite of the *Captivi* is in a play not very generally known, the *Canterbury Guests*, by Ravenscroft.

But although it might be difficult to find a precise copy in modern times of the parasite of the *Captivi*, its principal plot has been repeatedly imitated, particularly in an old English drama, *The Case is altered*, supposed to have been written by Ben Jonson, and published in some editions of his works. Count Ferneze, a nobleman of Vicenza, and who corresponds to Hegio, lost a son called Camillo, when Vicenza was taken by the French. His other son, Paulo, is afterwards made prisoner by the same enemies. Chamont, the French general, and Camillo Ferneze, who, under the name of Gaspar, had entered into the French service, are taken prisoners by the Italians; and while in captivity they agree to change names, and apparent situations. Camillo, who passes for Chamont, is carefully retained in confinement at Vicenza, while that general is despatched by the Count Ferneze to procure the ransom of his son Paulo. The Count having subsequently detected the imposture, Camillo is put in fetters and ordered for execution. Chamont, however, returns with Paulo, whom he had now redeemed, and the Count afterwards discovers, by means of a tablet hanging round his neck, that the youth Camillo, whom he was treating with such severity, was the son whom he had lost during the sack of Vicenza.

[pg 124] The *Captivi* is also the foundation of *Les Captifs*, a comedy of Rotrou, where a father, afflicted by the captivity of a son, purchases all the slaves exposed to sale in Ætolia, in the hope of recovering his child. The interest and vivacity of the play, which is one of the best of its author, are supported by the pleasantries of a parasite, and a variety of ingenious incidents. Ginguené has mentioned, in the *Histoire Litteraire d'Italie*, that the *Captivi* must also have suggested the *Suppositi*, a comedy by the author of the *Orlando Furioso*. Ariosto, however, has made the incidents of the *Captivi* subservient to a love intrigue, and not to the deliverance of a prisoner. Whilst Erostrato, a young gentleman, acts the part of a domestic in the house of his mistress's father, his servant, Dulippo, personates his master, and studies in his place at the university of Ferrara. At the conclusion of the piece, Dulippo is discovered to be the son of an old and rich doctor of laws, who was the rival in love of Erostrato. There is a parasite in this play as in the *Captivi*, but the character of the doctor is new, and the scenes chiefly consist of the schemes which are laid by the master and servant to disappoint his views as to the lady of whom Erostrato is enamoured.

Casina. This play is so called from the name of a female slave, on whom, though she does not once appear on the stage, the whole plot of the drama hinges. It is said in the prologue to have been translated from Diphilus, a Greek writer of the new comedy, by whom it was called Κληρουμενοι, the Lot Drawers. Diphilus was a contemporary of Menander; he was distinguished by his comic wit and humour and occasionally by the moral sententious character of his dramas, of which he is said to have written a hundred, and from which larger fragments have been preserved than from any Greek plays belonging to the new comedy. Notwithstanding what is said in the Delphine Plautus, it is evident from its terms, that the prologue could not have been prefixed by the dramatist himself, but must have been written a good many years after his death, on occasion of a revival of the *Casina*. It would appear from it that the plays of Plautus had rather gone out of fashion immediately after his death; but the public at length, tired with the new comedies, began to call for the reproduction of those of Plautus—

> "Nam, nunc novæ quæ prodeunt comœdiæ,
> Multo sunt nequiores, quam nummi novi,
> Nos postquam rumores populi intelleximus,
> Studiose expetere vos Plautinas fabulas,
> Antiquam ejus edimus comœdiam."

[pg 125] From the same prologue it would seem that this play, when first represented, had surpassed in popularity all the dramatic productions of the time—

> "Hæc quum primùm acta est, vicit omnes fabulas."

It cannot, indeed, be denied, that, in the *Casina*, the unities of time and place are rigidly observed, and, in point of humour, it is generally accounted inferior to none of Plautus's dramas. The nature, however, of the subject, will admit only of a very slight sketch. The female slave, who gives name to the comedy, is beloved by her master, Stalino, and by his son, Euthynicus,—the former of whom employs Olympio, his bailiff in the country, and the latter his armour-bearer, Chalinus, to marry Casina, each being in hopes, by this contrivance, to obtain possession of the object of his affections. Cleostrata, Stalino's wife, suspecting her husband's designs, supports the interests of her son, and, after much dispute, it is settled, that the claims of the bailiff and armour-bearer should be decided by lot. Fortune having declared in favour of the former, Stalino obtains the loan of a neighbour's house for the occasion, and it is arranged, that its mistress should be invited for one evening by Cleostrata; but the jealous lady counteracts this plan by

declining the honour of the visit. At length all concur in making a dupe of the old man. Chalinus is dressed up in wedding garments to personate Casina, and the play concludes with the mortification of Stalino, at finding he had been imposed on by a counterfeit bride.

The plan here adopted by Stalino for securing possession of Casina, is nearly the same with that pursued by the Count Almaviva, in Beaumarchais' prose comedy, *Le Marriage de Figaro*; where the Count, with similar intentions, plans a marriage between Suzanne and his valet-de-chambre, Figaro, but has his best-laid schemes invariably frustrated. The concluding part of the *Casina* has probably, also, suggested the whole of the *Marescalco*, a comedy of the celebrated Aretine, which turns on the projected nuptials of the character who gives name to the piece, and whose supposed bride is discovered, during the performance of the marriage ceremony, to be a page of the Duke of Mantua, dressed up in wedding garments, in a frolic of the Duke's courtiers, in order to impose on the Marescalco. Those scenes in the *Ragazzo* of Lodovico Dolce, where a similar deception is practised and where Giacchetto, the disguised youth, minutely details the event of
[pg 126] the trick of which he was made the chief instrument, have also been evidently drawn from the same productive origin.[247]

The closest imitation, however, of the *Casina*, is Machiavel's comedy *Clitia*. Many of its scenes, indeed, have been literally translated from the Latin, and the incidents are altered in very few particulars. The Stalino of Plautus is called Nicomaco, and his wife Sofronia: their son is named Cleandro, and the dependents employed to court Clitia for behoof of their masters, Eustachio and Pirro. The chief difference is, that the young lover, who is supposed to be absent in the *Casina*, is introduced on the stage by the Italian author, and the object of his affections is a young lady, brought up and educated by his parents, and originally intrusted to their care by one of their friends, which makes the proposal of her marrying either of the servants offered to her choice more absurd than in the Latin original. The bridal garments, too, are not assumed by one of the rival servants, but by a third character, introduced and employed for the purpose. This comedy of Machiavel, his *Mandragola*, and the renowned tale of Belfegor, were the productions with which that profound politician and historian, who established a school of political philosophy in the Italian seat of the Muses—who applied a fine analysis to the Roman history, and a subtler than Aristotle to the theory of government—attempted, as he himself has so beautifully expressed it,

> "Fare il suo tristo tempo piu soave;
> Perche altrove non have,
> Dove voltare il viso,
> Che gli è stato interciso
> Mostrar con altre imprese altra virtute."

Cistellaria, (the Casket.)—The prologue to this play is spoken by the god *Auxilium*, at the end of the first act. It explains the subject of the piece—compliments the Romans on their power and military glory—and concludes with exhorting them to overcome the Carthaginians, and punish them as they deserve. Hence it is probable, that this play was written during the second Punic war, which terminated in the year 552; and as Plautus was born in the year 525, it may be plausibly conjectured, that the *Cistellaria* was one of his earliest productions. This also appears from its greater rudeness when compared with his other plays, and from the shortness and simplicity of the plot. But though the argument is trite and sterile, it is enlivened by a good deal
[pg 127] of comic humour, particularly in the delineation of some of the subordinate characters. Like many others of Plautus's plays, it turns on the accidental recognition of a lost child by her parents, in consequence of the discovery of a casket, containing some toys, which had been left with her when exposed, and by means of which she is identified and acknowledged.

In ancient times these recognitions, so frequently exhibited on the stage, were not improbable. The customs of exposing children, and of reducing prisoners of war to slavery—the little connection or intercourse between different countries, from the want of inns or roads—and the consequent difficulty of tracing a lost individual—rendered such incidents, to us apparently so marvellous, of not unusual occurrence in real life. In Greece, particularly, divided as it was into a number of small states, and surrounded by a sea infested with pirates, who carried on a commerce in slaves, free-born children were frequently carried off, and sold in distant countries. By the laws of Athens, marriage with a foreigner was null; or, at least, the progeny of such nuptials were considered as illegitimate, and not entitled to the privileges of Athenian citizens. Hence, the recognition of the supposed stranger was of the utmost importance to herself and lover. In real life, this recognition may have been sometimes actually aided by ornaments and trinkets. Parents frequently tied jewels and rings to the children whom they exposed, in order that such as found them might be encouraged to nourish and educate them, and that they themselves might afterwards be enabled to discover them, if Providence took care for their safety[248]. Plots, accordingly, which hinged on such circumstances, were invented even by the writers of the old Greek comedy. One of the later pieces of Aristophanes, now lost, entitled *Cocalus*, is said to have presented a recognition; and nearly the same sort of intrigue was afterwards employed by Menander, and, from his example, by Plautus and Terence. From imitation of the Greek and Latin comedies, similar incidents became common both in dramatic and romantic fiction. The pastoral romance of Longus hinges on a recognition of this species; and those elegant productions, in which the Italians have introduced the characters and occupations of rural life into the drama, are frequently founded on the exposure of children, who, after being brought up as shepherds by reputed fathers, are recognised by their real parents, from ornaments or tokens fastened to their persons when abandoned in infancy or childhood.

[pg 128] The *Cistellaria* has been more directly imitated in *Gli Incantesimi* of Giovam-Maria Cecchi, a Florentine dramatist of the sixteenth century. That part, however, of the plot which gives name to the piece, has been invented by the Italian author himself.

Curculio.—The subject of this play, turns on a recognition similar to that which occurs in the *Cistellaria*. It derives its title from the name of a parasite, who performs the part usually assigned by Plautus to an intriguing slave; and he is called Curculio, from a species of worm which eats through corn.

It is worthy of observation, that in the fourth act of this play, the Choragus, who was master of the Chorus, and stage-manager, or leader of the band, is introduced, expressing his fear lest he should be deprived of the clothes he had lent to Curculio, and addressing to the spectators a number of satirical remarks on Roman manners.

Vossius has noticed the inadvertency or ignorance of Plautus in this drama, where, though the scene is laid in Epidaurus, he sends the parasite to Caria, and brings him back in four days. This part of the comedy he therefore thinks has been invented by Plautus himself, since a Greek poet, to whom the geography of these districts must have been better known, would not have carried the parasite to so great a distance in so short a period.

Epidicus.—This play is so called from the name of a slave who sustains a principal character in the comedy, and on whose rogueries most of the incidents depend. Its most serious part consists in the discovery of a damsel, who proves to be sister to a young man by whom she has been purchased as a slave. The play has no prologue; but, at the beginning, a character is introduced, which the ancients called *persona protatica*,—that is, a person who enters only once, and at the commencement of the piece, for the sake of unfolding the argument, and does not appear again in any part of the drama. Such are Sosia, in the *Andria* of Terence, and Davus, in his *Phormio*. This is accounted rather an inartificial mode of informing the audience of the circumstances previous to the opening of the piece. It is generally too evident, that the narrative is made merely for the sake of the spectators; as there seldom appears a sufficient reason for one of the parties being so communicative to the other. Such explanations should come round, as it were, by accident, or be drawn involuntarily from the characters themselves in the course of the action.

[pg 129] The *Epidicus* is said to have been a principal favourite of the author himself; and, indeed, one of the characters in his *Bacchides* exclaims,

> “Etiam Epidicum, quam ego fabulam æque ac me ipsum amo.”

But, though popular in the ancient theatre, the *Epidicus* does not appear to be one of the plays of Plautus which has been most frequently imitated on the modern stage. There was, however, a very early Italian imitation of it in the *Emilia*, a comedy of Luigi da Groto, better known by the appellation of Cieco D’Adria, one of the earliest romantic poets of his country. The trick, too, of Epidicus, in persuading his master to buy a slave with whom his son was in love, has suggested the first device fallen on by Mascarelle, the valet in Moliere’s *Etourdi*, in order to place the female slave Celie at the disposal of her lover, by inducing his master to purchase her.

Menæchmi—hinges on something of the same species of humour as the *Amphitryon*—a doubt and confusion with regard to the identity of individuals. According to the Delphin Plautus, it was taken from a lost play of Menander, entitled Διδυμοι; but other commentators have thought, that it was more probably derived from Epicharmus, or some other Sicilian dramatist.

In this play, a merchant of Syracuse had two sons, possessing so strong a personal resemblance to each other, that they could not be distinguished even by their parents. One of these children, called Menæchmus, was lost by his father in a crowd on the streets of Syracuse, and, being found by a Greek merchant, was carried by him to Epidamnum, (Dyracchium,) and adopted as his son. Meanwhile the brother, (whose name, in consequence of this loss, had been changed to Menæchmus,) having grown up, had set out from Syracuse in quest of his relative. After a long search he arrived at Epidamnum, where his brother had by this time married, and had also succeeded to the merchant’s fortune. The amusement of the piece hinges on the citizens of Epidamnum mistaking the Syracusan stranger for his brother, and the family of the Epidamnian brother falling into a corresponding error. In this comedy we have also the everlasting parasite; and the first act opens with a preparation for an entertainment, which Menæchmus of Epidamnum had ordered for his mistress Erotium, and to which the parasite was invited. The Syracusan happening to pass, is asked to come in by his brother’s mistress, and partakes with her of the feast. He also receives from her, in order to bear it to the embroiderer’s, a robe which
[pg 130] his brother had carried off from his wife, with the view of presenting it to this mistress. Afterwards he is attacked by his brother’s jealous wife, and her father; and, as his answers to their reproaches convince them that he is deranged, they send straightway for a physician. The Syracusan escapes; but they soon afterwards lay hold of the Epidamnian, in order to carry him to the physician’s house, when the servant of the Syracusan, who mistakes him for his master, rescues him from their hands. The Epidamnian then goes to his mistress with the view of persuading her to return the robe to his wife. At length the whole is unravelled by the two Menæchmi meeting; when the servant of the Syracusan, surprised at their resemblance, discovers, after a few questions to each, that Menæchmus of Epidamnum is the twin-brother of whom his master had been so long in search, and who now agrees to return with them to Syracuse.

The great number of those Latin plays, where the merriment consists in mistakes arising from personal resemblances, must be attributed to the use of masks, which gave probability to such dramas; and yet, if the resemblance was too perfect, the humour, I think, must have lost its effect, as the spectators would not readily perceive the error that was committed.

No play has been so repeatedly imitated as the Menæchmi on the modern stage, particularly the Italian, where masks were also frequently employed. The most celebrated Italian imitation of the *Menæchmi* is *Lo Ipocrito* of Aretine, where the twin-brothers, Liseo and Brizio, had the same singular degree of resemblance as the Menæchmi. Brizio had been carried off a prisoner in early youth during the sack of Milan, and returns to that city, after a long absence, in the first act of the play, in quest of his relations. Liseo's servants, and his parasite, Lo Ipocrito, all mistake Brizio for their patron, and his wife takes him to share an entertainment prepared at her husband's house, and also intrusts him with the charge of some ornaments belonging to her daughter; while, on the other hand, Brizio's servant mistakes Liseo for his master. The interest of the play arises from the same sort of confusion as that which occurs in the *Menæchmi*; and from the continual astonishment of those who are deceived by the resemblance, at finding an individual deny a conversation which they were persuaded he had held a few minutes before. The play is otherwise excessively involved, in consequence of the introduction of the amours and nuptials of the five daughters of Liseo. The plot of the Latin comedy has also been followed in *Le Moglie* of Cecchi, and in the *Lucidi* of Agnuolo Firenzuola; but the incidents have been, in a great measure,
[pg 131] adapted by these dramatists to the manners of their native country. Trissino, in his *Simillimi*, has made little change on his original, except adding a chorus of sailors; as, indeed, he has himself acknowledged, in his dedication to the cardinal, Alessandro Farnese. In *Gli due Gemelli*, which was long a favourite piece on the Italian stage, Carlini acted both brothers; the scenes being so contrived that they were never brought on the stage together—in the same manner as in our farce of *Three and the Deuce*, where the idea of giving different characters and manners to the three brothers, with a perfect personal resemblance, by creating still greater astonishment in their friends and acquaintances, seems an agreeable addition.

The *Menæchmi* was translated into English towards the end of the sixteenth century, by William Warner, the author of *Albion's England*. This version, which was first printed in 1595, and is entitled, "Menæchmi, a pleasaunt and fine conceited comedy, taken out of the most excellent wittie poet Plautus, chosen purposely, as least harmefull, yet most delightful," was unquestionably the origin of Shakspeare's *Comedy of Errors*. The resemblance of the two Antipholis', and the other circumstances which give rise to the intrigue, are nearly the same as in Plautus. Some of the mistakes, too, which occur on the arrival of Antipholis of Syracuse at Ephesus, have been suggested by the Latin play. Thus, the Syracusan, on coming to Ephesus, dines with his brother's wife. This lady had under repair, at the goldsmith's, a valuable chain, which her husband resolves to present to his mistress, but the goldsmith gives it to the Syracusan. At length the Ephesian is believed insane by his friends, who bring Doctor Pinch, a conjurer, to exorcise him. Shakspeare has added the characters of the twin Dromios, the servants of the Antipholis's, who have the same singular resemblance to each other as their masters, which has produced such intricacy of plot that it is hardly possible to unravel the incidents.

The *Comedy of Errors* is accounted one of the earliest, and is certainly one of the least happy efforts of Shakspeare's genius. I cannot agree with M. Schlegel, in thinking it better than the Menæchmi of Plautus, or even than the best modern imitation of that comedy—*Les Menechmes, ou Les Jumeaux*, of the French poet Regnard, which is, at least, a more lively and agreeable imitation. All the scenes, however, have been accommodated to French manners; and the plot differs considerably from that of Plautus, being partly formed on an old French play of the same title, by Rotrou, which appeared as early as 1636. One chief distinction is, that the Chevalier
[pg 132] Menechme knows of the arrival of his brother from the country, and knows that he had come to Paris in order to receive an inheritance bequeathed to him by his uncle, as also to marry a young lady of whom the Chevalier was enamoured. The Chevalier avails himself of the resemblance to prosecute his love-suit with the lady, and to receive the legacy from the hands of an attorney, while his brother is in the meantime harassed by women to whom the Chevalier had formerly paid addresses, and is arrested for his debts. It was natural enough, as in Plautus, that an infant, stolen and carried to a remote country, should have transmitted no account of himself to his family, and should have been believed by them to be dead; but this can with difficulty be supposed of Regnard's Chevalier, who had not left his paternal home in Brittany till the usual age for entering on military service, and had ever since resided chiefly at Paris. The Chevalier finds, from letters delivered to him by mistake, that his brother had come to town to receive payment of a legacy recently bequeathed to him: But, unless it was left to any one who bore the name of Menechme, it is not easy to see how the attorney charged with the payment, should have allowed himself to be duped by the Chevalier. Nor is it likely that, suspicious as the elder Menechme is represented, he should trust so much to his brother's valet, or allow himself to be terrified in the public street and open day into payment of a hundred louis d'or. It is equally improbable that Araminte should give up the Chevalier to her niece, or that the elder Menechme should marry the old maid merely to get back half the sum of which his brother had defrauded him. That all the adventures, besides, should terminate to the advantage of the Chevalier, has too much an air of contrivance, and takes away that hazard which ought to animate pieces of this description, and which excites the interest in Plautus, where the incidents prove fortunate or unfavourable indiscriminately to the two brothers.

In Plautus, the robe which Menæchmus of Epidamnum carries off from his wife, suffices for

almost the whole intrigue. It alone brings into play the falsehood and avarice of the courtezan, the inclination of both the Menæchmi for pleasure, the gluttony of the parasite, and rage of the jealous wife: But in the French *Menechmes*,—trunks, letters, a portrait, promises of marriage, and presents, are heaped on each other, to produce accumulated mistakes. Regnard has also introduced an agreeable variety, by discriminating the characters of the brothers, between whom Plautus and Shakspeare have scarcely drawn a shade of difference. The Chevalier is a polished gentleman—very ingenious; but, I think, not very honest: His brother is blunt, testy, and
[pg 133] impatient, and not very wise. The difference, indeed, in their language and manners, is so very marked, that it seems hardly possible, whatever might be the personal resemblance, that the Chevalier's mistress could have been deceived. These peculiarities of disposition, however, render the mistakes, and the country brother's impatience under them, doubly entertaining—

"Faudra-t-il que toujours je sois dans l'embarras
De voir une furie attachée a mes pas?"

And when assailed by Araminte, the old maid to whom his brother had promised marriage—

"Esprit, demon, lutin, ombre, femme, ou furie,
Qui que tu sois, enfin laisse moi, je te prie."

When his brother is at last discovered, and indubitably recognized, he exclaims,

"Mon frere en verité—Je m'en rejouis fort,
Mais j'avais cependant compté sur votre mort."

Boursault's comedy, *Les Menteurs qui ne mentent point*, though somewhat different in its fable from the Latin *Menæchmi*, is founded on precisely the same species of humour—the exact resemblance of the two Nicandres occasioning ludicrous mistakes and misunderstandings among their valets and mistresses.

The most recent French imitation of the play of Plautus is the *Menechmes Grecs*, by Cailhava, in which the plot is still more like the Latin comedy than the *Menechmes* of Regnard; but the characters are new. This piece has been extremely popular on the modern French stage.—"Le public," says Chenier, "s'est empressé de rendre justice a la peinture piquante de mœurs de la Grece, a la verité des situations, au naturel du dialogue, au merite rare d'une gaité franche, qui ne degenere pas en bouffonnerie[249]."

Miles Gloriosus, (the Braggart Captain.) This was a character of the new Greek comedy, introduced and brought to perfection by Philemon and Menander. These dramatists wrote during the reigns of the immediate successors of Alexander the Great. At that period, his generals who had established sovereignties in Syria and Egypt, were in the practice of recruiting their armies by levying mercenaries in Greece. The soldiers who had thus served in the wars of the Seleucidæ
[pg 134] and Ptolemies, were in the habit, when they returned home to Greece after their campaigns, of astonishing their friends with fabulous relations of their exploits in distant countries. Having been engaged in wars with which Athens had no immediate concern or interest, these partizans met with little respect or sympathy from their countrymen, and their lies and bravadoes having made them detested in Athenian society[250], they became the prototypes of that dramatic character of which the constant attributes were the most absurd vanity, stupidity, profusion, and cowardice. This overcharged character, along with that of the slave and parasite, were transferred into the dramas of Plautus, the faithful mirrors of the new Greek comedy. The first act of the *Miles Gloriosus* has little to do with the plot: It only serves to acquaint us with the character of the Captain Pyrgopolinices; and it is for this purpose alone that Plautus has introduced the parasite, who does not return to the stage after the first scene. The boasts of this captain are quite extravagant, but they are not so gross as the flatteries of the parasite: indeed it is not to be conceived that any one could swallow such compliments as that he had broken an elephant's thigh with his fist, and slaughtered seven thousand men in one day, or that he should not have perceived the sarcasms of the parasite intermixed with his fulsome flattery. Previous, however, to the invention of gunpowder, more could be performed in war by the personal prowess of individuals, than can be now accomplished; and hence the character of the braggart captain may not have appeared quite so exaggerated to the ancients as it seems to us. One man of peculiar strength and intrepidity often carried dismay into the hostile squadrons, as Goliah defied all the armies of Israel, and, with a big look, and a few arrogant words, struck so great a terror, that the host fled before him.

Most European nations being imbued with military habits and manners for many centuries after their first rise, the part of a boasting coward was one of the broadest, and most obviously humorous characters, that could be presented to the spectators. Accordingly, the braggart Captain, though he has at length disappeared, was one of the most notorious personages on the early Italian, French, and English stage.

Tinca, the braggart Captain in *La Talanta*, a comedy by Aretine, is a close copy of Thraso, the soldier in Terence, the play being taken from the *Eunuchus*, where Thraso is a chief character. But Spampana, the principal figure in the *Farsa Satira Morale*, a dramatic piece of the fifteenth
[pg 135] century, by Venturino of Pesaro, was the original and genuine Capitano Glorioso, a character well known, and long distinguished in the Italian drama. He was generally equipped with a mantle and long rapier; and his personal qualities nearly resembled those of the Count di Culagna, the hero

of Tassoni's mock heroic poem *La Secchia Rapita*:—

"Quest' era un Cavalier bravo e galante,
Ch'era fuor de perigli un Sacripante.
Ma ne perigli un pezzo di polmone:
Spesso ammazzato avea qualche gigante,
E si scopriva poi, ch'era un cappone."

This military poltroon long kept possession of the Italian stage, under the appellations of Capitan Spavento and Spezzafer, till about the middle of the sixteenth century, when he yielded his place to the Capitano Spagnuolo, whose business was to utter Spanish rodomontades, to kick out the native Italian Captain in compliment to the Spaniards, and then quietly accept of a drubbing from Harlequin. When the Spaniards had entirely lost their influence in Italy, the Capitan Spagnuolo retreated from the stage, and was succeeded by that eternal poltroon, Scaramuccio, a character which was invented by Tiberio Fiurilli, the companion of the boyhood of Louis XIV[251].

In imitation of the Italian captain, the early French dramatists introduced a personage, who patiently received blows while talking of dethroning emperors and distributing crowns. The part was first exhibited in *Le Brave*, by Baif, acted in 1567; but there is no character which comes so near to the Miles Gloriosus of Plautus, as that of Chasteaufort in Cyrano Bergerac's *Pedant Joué*. In general, the French captains have more rodomontade and solemnity, with less buffoonery, than their Italian prototypes. The captain Matamore, in Corneille's *Illusion Comique*, actually addresses the following lines to his valet:—

"II est vrai que je rêve, et ne saurois resoudre,
Lequel des deux je dois le premier mettre en poudre,
Du grand Sophi de Perse, ou bien du grand Mogol."

And again—

"Le seul bruit de mon nom renverse les murailles,
Defait les escadrons, et gagne les batailles;
D'un seul commandement que je fais aux trois Parques,
Je depeuple l'état des plus heureux monarques."

[pg 136] Corneille's Matamore also resembles the Miles Gloriosus, in his self-complacency on the subject of personal beauty, and his belief that every woman is in love with him. Pyrgopolinices declares—

"Miserum esse pulchrum hominem nimis."

And in like manner, Matamore—

"Ciel qui sais comme quoi j'en suis persecuté.
Un peu plus de repos avec moins de beaute.
Fais qu'un si long mepris enfin la desabuse."

Scarron, who was nearly contemporary with Corneille, painted this character in Don Gaspard de Padille, the *Fanfaron*, as he is called, of the comedy *Jodelet Duelliste*. Gaspard, however, is not a very important or prominent character of the piece. Jodelet himself, the valet of Don Felix, seems intended as a burlesque or caricature of all the braggarts who had preceded him. Having received a blow, he is ever vowing vengeance against the author of the injury in his absence, but on his appearance, suddenly becomes tame and submissive.

The braggart captains of the old English theatre have much greater merit than the utterers of these nonsensical rhapsodies of the French stage. Falstaff has been often considered as a combination of the characters of the parasite and Miles Gloriosus; but he has infinitely more wit than either; and the liberty of fiction in which he indulges, is perhaps scarcely more than is necessary for its display. His cheerfulness and humour are of the most characteristic and captivating sort, and instead of suffering that contumely with which the parasite and Miles Gloriosus are loaded, laughter and approbation attend his greatest excesses. His boasting speeches are chiefly humorous; jest and merriment account for most of them, and palliate them all. It is only subsequent to the robbery that he discovers the traits of a Miles Gloriosus. Most of the ancient braggarts bluster and boast of distant wars, beyond the reach of knowledge or evidence—of exploits performed in Persia and Armenia—of storms and stratagems—of falling pell-mell on a whole army, and putting thousands to the sword, till, by some open and apparent fact, they are brought to shame as cowards and liars; but Falstaff's boasts refer to recent occurrences, and he always preserves himself from degradation by the address with which he defies detection, and extricates himself from every difficulty. His character, however, in the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, has some affinity to the captains of the Roman stage, from his being
[pg 137] constantly played on in consequence of his persuasion that women are in love with him. The swaggering Pistol in *King Henry IV.*, is chiefly characterized by his inflated language, and is, as Doll calls him, merely "a fustian rascal." Bessus, in Beaumont and Fletcher's *King and No King*, is said by Theobald to be a copy of Falstaff; but he has little or none of his humour. Bessus was an abusive wretch, and so much contemned, that no one called his words in question; but, afterwards, while flying in battle, having accidentally rushed on the enemy, he acquired a reputation for valour; and being now challenged to combat by those whom he had formerly

traduced, his great aim is to avoid fighting, and yet to preserve, by boasting, his new character for courage. However fine the scene between Bessus and Arbaces, at the conclusion of the third act, the darker and more infamous shades of character there portrayed ought not to have been delineated, as our contemptuous laughter is converted, during the rest of the play, or, on a second perusal, into detestation and horror. Bobadil, in Ben Jonson's *Every Man in his Humour*, has generally been regarded as a copy of the Miles Gloriosus; but the late editor of Jonson thinks him a creation *sui generis*, and perfectly original. "The soldiers of the Roman stage," he continues, "have not many traits in common with Bobadil. Pyrgopolinices, and other captains with hard names, are usually wealthy—all of them keep mistresses, and some of them parasites—but Bobadil is poor. They are profligate and luxurious—but Bobadil is stained with no inordinate vice, and is so frugal, that a bunch of radishes, and a pipe to close the orifice of his stomach, satisfy all his wants. Add to this, that the vanity of the ancient soldier is accompanied with such deplorable stupidity, that all temptation to mirth is taken away, whereas Bobadil is really amusing. His gravity, which is of the most inflexible nature, contrasts admirably with the situations into which he is thrown; and though beaten, baffled, and disgraced, he never so far forgets himself as to aid in his own discomfiture. He has no soliloquies, like Bessus and Parolles, to betray his real character, and expose himself to unnecessary contempt: nor does he break through the decorum of the scene in a single instance. He is also an admirer of poetry, and seems to have a pretty taste for criticism, though his reading does not appear very extensive; and his decisions are usually made with somewhat too much promptitude. In a word, Bobadil has many distinguishing traits, and, till a preceding braggart shall be discovered, with something more
[pg 138] than big words and beating, to characterize him, it may not be amiss to allow Jonson the credit of having depended on his own resources." The character of the braggart captain was continued in the Bernardo of Shadwell's *Amorous Bigot*, and Nol Bluff, in Congreve's *Old Bachelor*. These are persons who apparently would destroy every thing with fire and sword; but their mischief is only in their words, and they "will not swagger with a Barbary hen, if her feathers turn back with any show of resistance." The braggarts, indeed, of modern dramatists, have been universally represented as cowardly, from Spampana down to Captain Flash. But cowardice is not a striking attribute of the Miles Gloriosus of Plautus, at least it is not made the principal source of ridicule as with the moderns. We have instead, a vain conceit of his person, and his conviction that every woman is in love with him.

This feature in the character of the Miles Gloriosus, produces a principal part in the intrigue of this amusing drama, which properly commences at the second act, and is said, in a prologue there introduced, to have been taken from the Greek play Αλαζων. While residing at Athens, the captain had purchased from her mother a young girl, (whose lover was at that time absent on an embassy,) and had brought her with him to his house at Ephesus. The lover's slave entered into the captain's service, and, seeing the girl in his possession, wrote to his former master, who, on learning the fate of his mistress, repaired to Ephesus. There he went to reside with Periplectomenes, a merry old bachelor, who had been a friend of his father, and now agreed to assist him in recovering the object of his affections. The house of Periplectomenes being immediately adjacent to that of the captain, the ingenious slave dug an opening between them; and the keeper, who had been intrusted by the captain with charge of the damsel, was thus easily persuaded by her rapid, and to him unaccountable, transition from one building to the other, that it was a twin sister, possessing an extraordinary resemblance to her, who had arrived at the house of Periplectomenes. Afterwards, by a new contrivance, a courtezan is employed to pretend that she is the wife of Periplectomenes, and to persuade the captain that she is in love with him. To facilitate this amour, he allows the girl, whom he had purchased at Athens, to depart with her twin sister and her lover, who had assumed the character of the master of the vessel in which she sailed. The captain afterwards goes to the house of Periplectomenes to a supposed assignation, where he is seized and beat, but does not discover how completely he had been duped, till the Athenian girl had got clear off with her lover.

[pg 139] This play must, in the representation, have been one of the most amusing of its author's productions. The scenes are full of action and bustle, while the secret communication between the two houses occasions many lively incidents, and forms an excellent *jeu de theatre*.

With regard to the characters, the one which gives title to the play is, as already mentioned, quite extravagant; and no modern reader can enjoy the rodomontade of the Miles Gloriosus, or his credulity in listening with satisfaction to such monstrous tales of his military renown and amorous success. Flattery for potential qualities may be swallowed to any extent, and a vain man may wish that others should be persuaded that he had performed actions of which he is incapable; but no man can himself hearken with pleasure to falsehoods which he knows to be such, and which in the recital are not intended to impose upon others. Pleusides, the lover in this drama, is totally insipid and uninteresting, and we are not impressed with a very favourable opinion of his mistress from the account which is given of her near the beginning of the play:—

> "Os habet, linguam, perfidiam, malitiam, atque audaciam,
> Confidentiam, confirmitatem, fraudolentiam:
> Qui arguet se, eum contra vincat jurejurando suo.
> Domi habet animum falsiloquum, falsificum, falsijurium."

The principal character, the one which is best supported, and which is indeed sustained with considerable humour, is that of Periplectomenes, who is an agreeable old man, distinguished by his frankness, jovial disposition, and abhorrence of matrimony. There is one part of his conduct,

however, which I wish had been omitted, as it savours too much of cunning, and reminds us too strongly of Ben Jonson's Volpone. Talking of his friends and relations, he says—

—— "Me ad se, ad prandium, ad cœnam vocant.
Ille miserrimum se retur, minimum qui misit mihi.
Illi inter se certant donis; ego hæc mecum mussito:
Bona mea inhiant: certatim dona mittunt et munera."

I have often thought that the character of Durazzo, in Massinger's *Guardian*, was formed on that of Periplectomenes. Like him, Durazzo is a jovial old bachelor, who aids his nephew Caldoro in his amour with Calista. When the lover in Plautus apologizes to his friend for having engaged him in an enterprize so unsuitable to his years, he replies—

"Quid ais tu? itane tibi ego videor oppido Acheronticus,
Tam capularis; tamne tibi diu vita vivere?
Nam equidem haud sum annos natus præter quinquaginta et quatuor,
Clare oculis video, pernix sum manibus, sum pedes mobilis."

[pg 140] In like manner Durazzo exclaims—

"My age! do not use
That word again; if you do, I shall grow young,
And swinge you soundly. I would have you know,
Though I write fifty odd, I do not carry
An almanack in my bones to predeclare
What weather we shall have; nor do I kneel
In adoration at the spring, and fall
Before my doctor." ——

Periplectomenes boasts of his convivial talents, as also of his amorous disposition, and his excellence at various exercises—

"Et ego amoris aliquantum habeo, humorisque meo etiam in corpore:
Nequedum exarui ex amœnis rebus et voluptariis.
* * * *
Tum ad saltandum non Cinædus magis usquam saltat quam ego."

This may be compared with the boast of Durazzo—

"Bring me to a fence school,
And crack a blade or two for exercise;
Ride a barbed horse, or take a leap after me,
Following my hounds or hawks, and, (by your leave,)
At a gamesome mistress, you shall confess
I'm in the May of my abilities."

It may be perhaps considered as a confirmation of the above conjecture concerning Massinger's imitation of Plautus, that the cook in the *Guardian* is called Cario, which is also the name of the cook of Periplectomenes.

There is, however, a coincidence connected with this drama of Plautus, which is much more curious and striking than its resemblance to the *Guardian* of Massinger. The plot of the *Miles Gloriosus* is nearly the same with the story of the *Two Dreams* related in the *Seven Wise Masters*, a work originally written by an Indian philosopher, long before the Christian æra, and which, having been translated into Greek under the title of *Syntipas*, became current during the dark ages through all the countries of Europe, by the different names of *Dolopatos*, *Erastus*, and *Seven Wise Masters*,—the frame remaining substantially the same, but the stories being frequently adapted to the manners of different nations. In this popular story-book the tale of the Two Dreams concerns a knight, and a lady who was constantly confined by a jealous husband, in a tower almost inaccessible. Having become mutually enamoured, in consequence of seeing each other in dreams, the knight repaired to the residence of the husband, by whom he was hospitably received, and was at length allowed to build a habitation on his possessions, at no great distance
[pg 141] from the castle in which his wife was inclosed. When the building was completed, the knight secretly dug a communication under ground, between his new dwelling and the tower, by which means he enjoyed frequent and uninterrupted interviews with the object of his passion. At length the husband was invited to an entertainment prepared at the knight's residence, at which his wife was present, and presided in the character of the knight's mistress. During the banquet the husband could not help suspecting that she was his wife, and in consequence he repaired, after the feast was over, to the tower, where he found her sitting composedly in her usual dress. This, and his confidence in the security of the tower, the keys of which he constantly kept in his pocket, dispelled his suspicions, and convinced him that the Beauty who had done the honours of the knight's table, had merely a striking resemblance to his own lovely consort. Being thus gradually accustomed to meet her at such entertainments, he at last complied with his friend's request, and kindly assisted at the ceremony of the knight's marriage with his leman. After their union, he complacently attended them to the harbour, and handed the lady to the vessel which the knight had prepared for the elopement. This story also coincides with Le Chevalier a la

Trappe, one of the Fabliaux of the Norman Trouveurs[252], with a tale in the fourth part of the Italian *Novellino* of Massuccio Salernitano, and with the adventures of the *Vieux Calender*, in Gueulette's *Contes Tartares*.

Mercator—is one of the plays for which Plautus was indebted to Philemon, the contemporary and the successful rival of Menander, over whom he usually triumphed by the theatrical suffrages, while contending for the prize of comedy. The Roman critics unanimously concur in representing these popular decisions as unjust and partial. But Quintilian, while he condemns the perverted judgment of those who preferred Philemon to Menander, acknowledges that he must be universally admitted to have merited the next place to his great rival.—"Qui ut pravis sui temporis judiciis Menandro sæpe prælatus est, ita consensu tamen omnium meruit credi secundus[253]."

An interesting account of Philemon is given in the *Observer*, by Cumberland, who has also collected the strange and inconsistent stories concerning the manner of his death. He is represented to us as having been a man of amiable character, and cheerful disposition, seldom
[pg 142] agitated by those furious passions which distracted the mind of Menander. He lived to the extraordinary age of a hundred and one, during which long period he wrote ninety comedies. Of these, the critics and grammarians have preserved some fragments, which are generally of a tender and sentimental, sometimes even of a plaintive cast. Apuleius, however, informs us, that Philemon was distinguished for the happiest strokes of wit and humour, for the ingenious disposition of his plots, for his striking and well managed discoveries, and the admirable adaptation of his characters to their situations in life[254]. To judge by the Latin Mercator, imitated or translated from the Εμπορος of Philemon, it is impossible not to consider him as inferior to those other Greek dramatists from whom Plautus borrowed his *Amphitryon*, *Aulularia*, *Casina*, and *Miles Gloriosus*; yet it must be recollected, that those are the best comedies which suffer most by a transfusion into another language. The English Hypocrites and Misers would indeed be feeble records of the genius of Moliere. Of one point, however, we may clearly judge, even through the mist of translation. Notwithstanding what is said by Apuleius concerning the purity of Philemon's dramas, in none of the plays of Plautus is greater moral turpitude represented. A son is sent abroad by his father, with the view of reclaiming him from the dissolute course of life which he had followed. The youth, however, is so little amended by his travels, that he brings a mistress home in the ship with him. The father, seeing the girl, falls in love with her. His son, in order to conceal his passion, proposes to sell its object, but engages one of his acquaintances to purchase her for him. By some mismanagement, she is bought by a friend whom the father had employed for this purpose, and is carried, as had been previously arranged, to the purchaser's house. The friend's wife, however, being jealous of this inmate, her husband is obliged to explain matters for her satisfaction, and the old debauchee, in consequence, incurs, before the conclusion of the comedy, merited shame and reproach.

An old libertine may be a very fit subject for satire and ridicule, but in this play there is certainly too much latitude allowed to the debaucheries of youth. The whole moral of the drama is contained in three lines near the conclusion:—

> "Neu quisquam posthac prohibeto adolescentem filium
> Quin amet, et scortum ducat; quod bono fiat modo:
> Si quis prohibuerit, plus perdet clam, quam si præhibuerit palam."

[pg 143] Nothing can be more ridiculous than the delays and trifling of the persons in this piece, under circumstances which must naturally have excited their utmost impatience. Examples of this occur in the scene which occupies nearly the whole of the first act, between Charinus and his slave Acanthio, and the equally tedious dialogue in the fifth act between Eutychus and Charinus.

The *Mercator* of Plautus is the origin of *La Stiava*, an Italian comedy by Cecchi; and in the second scene of the second act, there are two lines which have a remarkable resemblance to the conclusion of the celebrated speech of Jaques, "All the world's a stage," in *As you Like it*.

> "Senex cum extemplo est jam nec sentit, nec sapit.
> Aiunt solere eum rursum repuerascere."

Mostellaria,—which the English translator of Plautus has rendered the Apparition,—represents a young Athenian, naturally of a virtuous disposition, who, during the absence of his father on a trading voyage, is led into every sort of vice and extravagance, partly by his inordinate love for a courtezan, and partly by the evil counsels of one of his slaves, called Tranio. During an entertainment, which the youth is one day giving in his father's mansion, he is suddenly alarmed by the accounts which Tranio brings, of the unexpected return of the old man, whom he had just seen landing near the harbour. At the same time, however, the slave undertakes to prevent his entering the house. In prosecution of this design he there locks up his young master and his guests, and, on the approach of the old gentleman, gravely informs him that the house was now shut up, in consequence of being haunted by the apparition of an unfortunate man, long since murdered in it by the person from whom it had been last purchased. Tranio has scarcely prevailed on the father to leave the door of the dwelling, when they unluckily meet a money-lender, who had come to crave payment of a large debt from the profligate son; but the ingenious slave persuades the father, that the money had been borrowed to pay for a house which was a great bargain, and which his son had bought in place of that which was haunted. A new dilemma, however, arises, from the old gentleman's asking to see the house: Tranio artfully obtains leave

from the owner, who being obliged to go to the Forum, nothing is said on this occasion with regard to the sale. He examines the house a second time along with the owner, but Tranio had previously begged him, as from motives of delicacy, to say nothing concerning his purchase; and
[pg 144] the whole passes as a visit, to what is called a Show-house. The old man highly approves of the bargain; but at length the whole deception is discovered, by his accidentally meeting an attendant of one of his son's companions, who is just going into the haunted house to conduct his master home from that scene of festivity. He has thus occasion to exercise all his patience and clemency in forgiveness of the son by whom he has been almost ruined, and of the slave by whom he had been so completely duped.

In this play, the character of the young man might have been rendered interesting, had it been better brought out; but it is a mere sketch. He is a grave and serious character, hurried into extravagance by bad example, evil counsel, and one fatal passion. A long soliloquy, in which he compares human life to a house, reminds us, in its tone of feeling and sentiment, of "All the world's a stage." The father seems a great deal too foolish and credulous, and the slave must have relied much on his weakness, when he ventured on such desperate expedients, and such palpable lies. Slaves, it will already have been remarked, are principal characters in many of the dramas of Plautus; and a curious subject of inquiry is presented in their insolence, effrontery, triumphant roguery, and habitual familiarity with their masters at one moment, while at the next they are threatened with the lash or crucifixion. In Athens, however, where the prototype of this character was found, the slave was treated by his master with much more indulgence than the Spartan Helot, or any other slaves in Greece. The masters themselves, who were introduced on the ancient stage, were not in the first ranks of society; and the vices which required the assistance of their slaves reduced them to an equality. Besides, an Athenian or Roman master could hardly be displeased with the familiarity of those who were under such complete subjection; and the striking contrast of their manners and situation would render their sallies as poignant as the spirited remarks of Roxalana in the seraglio of the Sultan. The character, too, gave scope for those jests and scurrilities, which seem to have been indispensable ingredients in a Roman comedy, but which would be unsuitable in the mouths of more dignified persons. They were, in fact, the buffoons of the piece, who avowed without scruple their sensual inclinations and want of conscience; for not only their impudence, but their frauds and deceptions, seem to have been highly relished by the spectators. It is evident that both the Greeks and Romans took peculiar pleasure in seeing a witty slave cheat a covetous master, and that the ingenuity of the
[pg 145] fraud was always thought sufficient atonement for its knavery. Perhaps this unfortunate class of men derived so few advantages from society, that they were considered as entitled, at least on the stage, to break through its ties. The character of a saucy and impudent slave had been already portrayed in the old Greek comedy. In the *Plutus* of Aristophanes, Carion, the slave of Chremylus, is the most prominent character, and is distinguished by freedom of remark and witty impudence. To these attributes there was added, in the new comedy, a spirit of roguery and intrigue: and in this form the character was almost universally adopted by the Latin dramatists. The slaves of Plautus correspond to the valets—the Crispins, and Merlins of the French theatre, whose race commenced with Merlin, in Scarron's *Marquis Ridicule*. They were also introduced in Moliere's earliest pieces, but not in his best; and were in a great measure dropped by his successors, as, in fact, they had ceased to be the spring of any important event or intrigue in the world. Indeed, I agree with M. Schlegel, in doubting if they could ever have been introduced as happily on the modern as the ancient stage. A wretch who was born in servitude, who was abandoned for life to the capricious will of a master, and was thus degraded below the dignity of man, might excite laughter instead of indignation, though he did not conform to the strictest precepts of honesty. He was placed in a state of warfare with his oppressor, and cunning became his natural arms.

The French dramatist who has employed the character of the intriguing valet to most advantage, is Regnard; to whom, among many other agreeable pieces, we are indebted for a delightful imitation of the *Mostellaria* of Plautus, entitled, *Le Retour Imprevu, comedie en prose, et en une acte*.

In this play, the incidents of the *Mostellaria* have been in general adopted, though they have been somewhat transposed. We have the imposture of Merlin, who corresponds with Plautus's Tranio, as to the haunted house, and his subterfuge when the usurer comes to claim the money which he had lent. In place, however, of asking to see the new house, the father proposes to deposit some merchandise in it. Merlin then persuades him, that the lady to whom it formerly belonged, and who had not yet quitted it, was unfortunately deprived of reason, and, having been in consequence interdicted by her relations from the use of her property, the house had been exposed to sale. At the same time, the artful valet finds an opportunity of informing the real owner, that the old man had gone mad in consequence of having lost all his merchandise at sea.
[pg 146] Accordingly, when they meet, neither of them pays the smallest attention to what each considers the raving of the other. Instead of a courtezan, Regnard has introduced a young lady, with whom Clitandre is in love; but he has given her the manners rather of a courtezan, than a young lady. There is one incident mentioned in the *Mostellaria* which is omitted in the *Retour Imprevu*, and of which even Plautus has not much availed himself, though it might have been enlarged on, and improved to advantage: the old man mentions, that he had met the person from whom he had bought the haunted house, and that he had taxed him with the murder of his guest, whose apparition still walked, but that he had stoutly denied the charge.

The *Fantasmi* of Ercole Bentivoglio, an Italian comedy of the sixteenth century, is formed on the

same original as the *Retour Imprevu*. The *Mostellaria* has likewise suggested the plot of an old tragi-comedy by Heywood, printed in 1633, and entitled *The English Traveller*. Fielding's *Intriguing Chambermaid* is also derived from the *Mostellaria*, but through the medium of Regnard's comedy. Indeed, it may be considered as almost a translation from the French; except that the author has most absurdly assigned the part of the Latin Tranio, and French Merlin, to a chambermaid, whom he calls Mrs Lettice, and has added a great number of songs and *double entendres*.

It has been said, that the last act of Ben Johnson's *Alchemist*, where Face, in order to conceal the iniquities committed in his master's house during his absence, tries to persuade him, that it was shut up on account of being visited by an apparition, has been suggested by the *Mostellaria*[255]; but, as there is no resemblance between the two plays in other incidents, we cannot be assured that the *Mostellaria* was at all in the view of the great English dramatist.

Persa.—In this play, which belongs to the lowest order of comedy, the characters are two slaves, a foot-boy of one of these slaves, a parasite, a pander, and a courtezan, with her waiting-maid. The manners represented are such as might be expected from this respectable group. The incidents are few and slight, hinging almost entirely on a deceit practised against the pander, who is persuaded to give a large sum for a free woman, whom the slaves had dressed up as an Arabian captive, and whom he was obliged to relinquish after having paid the money. The fable is
[pg 147] chiefly defective from the trick of the slaves being intended to serve their own purposes. But such devices are interesting only when undertaken for the advantage of higher characters; a comedy otherwise must degenerate into farce.

Pœnulus, (the Carthaginian,) is one of the longest, and, I think, on the whole, the dullest of Plautus' performances. It turns on the discovery of a lost child, who had been stolen from her Carthaginian parents in infancy, and had been carried to Greece. In none of those numerous plays which turn on the recognition of lost children, has Plautus ever exhibited an affecting interview, or even hit on an expression of natural tenderness. The characters are either not brought on the stage at the conclusion, and we are merely told by some slave or parasite that the discovery had taken place: or, as in the instance of Hanno and his daughter in the present drama, the parties most interested teaze and torment each other with absurd questions, instead of giving way to any species of emotion. It is a high example, however, of the noble and generous spirit of the Romans, that Hanno, the Carthaginian introduced in this play, which was represented in the course of the Punic wars, is more amiable than almost any other character in Plautus. It is evident, from his quibbles and obscene jests, that the Latin dramatist adapted his plays to the taste of the vulgar; and if the picture of a villainous or contemptible Carthaginian could have pleased the Roman public, as the Jew of Malta gratified the prejudices of an English mob, Plautus would not have hesitated to accommodate himself to such feelings, and his Hanno would doubtless have appeared in those hateful colours in which the Jews, or in that ridiculous light in which the French, have usually been exhibited on the British stage.

The employment of different dialects, or idioms, which has been so great a resource of the modern comic muse, particularly on the Italian stage, had been early resorted to in Greece. Aristophanes, in one of his comedies, introduced the jargon of a woman of Lacedæmon, where the Doric dialect was spoken in its rudest form. Plautus, in a scene of the *Pœnulus*, has made his Carthaginian speak in his native language; and as the Carthaginian tongue was but little known in Greece, it may be presumed that this scene was invented by Plautus himself.

Those remains of the Punic language which have been preserved, (though probably a good deal corrupted,) are regarded as curious vestiges of philological antiquity, and have afforded ample employment for the critics, who have laboured to illustrate and restore them to the right
[pg 148] readings. Commentators have found in them traces of all the ancient tongues, according to their own fancy, or some favourite system they had adopted. Joseph Scaliger considered them as little removed from the purity of original Hebrew[256]; and Pareus, in his edition of Plautus, printed them in Hebrew characters, as did Bochart, in his *Phaleg et Canaan*[257]. Others, from the resemblance of single letters, or syllables, have found in different words the Chinese, Ethiopian, Persian, or Coptic dialects[258]. Plautus, it is well known, had considerable knowledge of languages. Besides writing his own with the greatest purity, he was well acquainted with Greek, Persian, and Punic. The editor of the Delphin Plautus has a notable conjecture on this point: He supposes that in the mill in which Plautus laboured, (as if it had been a large mill on the modern construction,) there was a Carthaginian, a Greek, and a Persian slave, from whom alternately he acquired a knowledge of these tongues in the hours of relaxation from work!

Pseudolus—is one of those plays of Plautus which hinge on the contrivance of a slave in behalf of his young master, who is represented at the commencement of the play, as in despair at not having money sufficient to redeem his mistress, just then sold by Ballio, a slave-dealer, to a Macedonian captain for twenty *minæ*. Fifteen of these had been paid, and the girl was to be delivered up to him as soon as he sent the remaining five, along with an impression of a seal-ring, which the captain had left behind as a pledge. Pseudolus, the slave, having encountered the captain's messenger, on his way to deliver a letter containing the token and the balance of the stipulated price, personates the pander's servant, and is in consequence intrusted with the letter. While the messenger is refreshing himself at a tavern, Pseudolus persuades one of his fellow-slaves to assume the character of the captain's emissary, and to present the credentials (which Pseudolus places in his possession) to the pander, who immediately acknowledges their

authenticity, and, without hesitation, delivers up the girl in return. When the real messenger afterwards arrives, the slave-merchant treats him as an impostor hired by Pseudolus.

[pg 149] Next to the slave, the principal character in this comedy is that of the pander, which is sketched with the strong pencil of a master, and is an admirable representation of that last stage of human depravity and wretchedness, in which even appearances cease to be preserved with the world, and there exists no longer any feeling or anxiety concerning the opinion of others. Calidorus, the lover of the girl, upbraids him for his breach of faith—

> "Juravistine te illam nulli venditurum nisi mihi?
> *Ballio.* Fateor. *Cal.* Nempe conceptis verbis. *Bal.* Etiam consultis quoque.
> *Cal.* Perjuravisti, sceleste. *Bal.* At argentum intro condidi:
> Ego scelestus nunc argentum promere possum domo."

M. Dacier, however, is of a different opinion with regard to the merit of this character. He thinks that the *Pseudolus*, though mentioned by Cato in Cicero's Dialogue *De Senectute*, as a finished piece which greatly delighted its author[259], and though called, by one of his commentators, *Ocellus Fabularum Plauti*[260] was chiefly in Horace's view when he spoke, in his *Epistles*, of Plautus' want of success in the characters of a young passionate lover, a parsimonious father, and a cunning pimp,—

> —— "Aspice, Plautus
> Quo pacto partes tutetur amantis ephebi,
> Ut patris attenti, lenonis ut insidiosi."

These three characters all occur in this comedy; and Dacier maintains that they are very poorly supported by the poet.—Calidorus is a young lover, but his character (says the critic,) is so cold and lifeless, that he hardly deserves the name. His father, Simo, corresponds as little to the part of the *Patris attenti*; for he encourages the slave to deceive himself, and promises him a recompense if he succeed in over-reaching the slave-merchant, and placing in the hands of his son the girl on whom he doated. Ballio, the slave-dealer, so far from sustaining the character *lenonis insidiosi*, who should deceive every one, very foolishly becomes the dupe of a lying valet[261].

[pg 150] The scene between Calidorus and the pander, from which some lines are extracted above, and that by which it is preceded, where Ballio gives directions to his slaves, seem to have suggested two scenes in Sir Richard Steele's comedy of the *Funeral*. The play has been more closely imitated by Baptista Porta, the celebrated author of the Magia Naturalis in *La Trappolaria*, one of the numerous plays with the composition of which he amused his leisure, after the mysteries and chimeras of his chief work had excited the suspicion of the court of Rome, and he was in consequence prohibited from holding those assemblies of learned men, who repaired to his house with their newly discovered secrets in medicine and other arts. His play, which was first printed at Bergamo in 1596, is much more complicated in its incidents than the Latin original. Trappola, the Pseudolus of the piece, feigns himself, as in Plautus, to be the pander's slave, and persuades a parasite to act the part of the pander himself: By this stratagem, the parasite receives from the captain's servant the stipulated money and tokens, but delivers to him in return his ugly wife Gabrina, as the Beauty he was to receive; and there follows a comical scene, produced by the consequent amazement and disappointment of the captain. The parasite then personates the captain's servant, and, by means of the credentials of which he had possessed himself, obtains the damsel Filesia, whom he carries to her lover. With this plot, chiefly taken from Plautus, another series of incidents, invented by the Italian dramatist, is closely connected. The father of the young lover, Arsenio, had left his wife in Spain; and also another son, who had married there, and exactly resembled his brother in personal appearance. Arsenio being ordered by his father to sail from Naples, where the scene is laid, for Spain, in order to convey home his relatives in that country, and being in despair at the prospect of this separation from his mistress, the father is persuaded, by a device of the cheat Trappola, that he had not proceeded on the voyage, as his brother had already arrived. Availing himself of his resemblance, Arsenio personates his Spanish brother, and brings his mistress as his wife to his father's house, where she remains protected, in spite of the claims of the captain and pander, till the whole artifice is discovered by the actual arrival of the old lady from Spain. Arsenio's mistress being then strictly questioned, proves to be a near connection of the family, who had been carried off in childhood by corsairs, and she is now, with the consent of all, united to her lover.

[pg 151] There is also a close imitation of the incidents of the *Pseudolus* in Moliere's *Etourdi*, which turns on the stratagems of a valet to place a girl in possession of his master Lelie. His first device, as already mentioned, was suggested by the Epidicus[262]; but this having failed, he afterwards contrives to get into the service of his master's rival, Leander, who, having purchased the girl from the proprietor, had agreed to send a ring as a token, at sight of which she was to be delivered up. The valet receives the ring for this very purpose, carries it to the owner, and by such means is just on the point of obtaining possession of the girl, when his stratagem, as usual, is defeated by the *etourderie* of his master. This notion of the valet's best-laid plans being always counteracted, was probably suggested by the *Bacchides* of Plautus, where Mnesilochus repeatedly frustrates the well-contrived schemes of his slave Chrysalus; though, perhaps through the medium of the *Inavertito* of the Italian dramatist, Nicolo Barbieri, printed in 1629, or Quinault's *Amant Indiscret*, which was acted four years before Moliere's *Etourdi*, and is founded

on the same plan with that drama. In the particular incidents the *Etourdi* is compounded of the tricks of Plautus' slaves; but Moliere has shown little judgment in thus heaping them on each other in one piece. Such events might occur once, but not six or seven times, to the same person. In fact, the valet is more of an *Etourdi* than his master, as he never forewarns him of his plans; and we feel as we advance, that the play could not be carried on without a previous concert among the characters to connive at impossibilities, and to act in defiance of all common sense or discretion.

Rudens.—This play, which is taken from a Greek comedy of Diphilus, has been called *Rudens* by Plautus, from the rope or cable whereby a fisherman drags to shore a casket which chiefly contributes to the solution of the fable. In the prologue, which is spoken by Arcturus, we are informed of the circumstances which preceded the opening of the drama, and the situation in which the characters were placed at its commencement. Plautus has been frequently blamed by the critics for the fulness of his preliminary expositions, as tending to destroy the surprise and interest of the succeeding scenes. But I think he has been unjustly censured, even with regard to those prologues, where, as in that of the *Pœnulus*, he has anticipated the incidents, and revealed the issue of the plot. The comedies of Plautus were intended entirely for exhibition on the public stage, and not for perusal in the closet. The great mass of the Roman people in his age was somewhat rude: They had not been long accustomed to dramatic representations, and would have found it difficult to follow an intricate plot without a previous exposition. This, indeed, was not necessary in tragedies. The stories of Agamemnon and Œdipus, with other mythical subjects, so frequently dramatized by Ennius and Livius Andronicus, were sufficiently known; and, as Dryden has remarked, "the people, as soon as they heard the name of Œdipus, knew as well as
[pg 152] the poet that he had killed his father by mistake, and committed incest with his mother; that they were now to hear of a great plague, an oracle, and the ghost of Laius[263]." It was quite different, however, in those new inventions which formed the subjects of comedies, and in which the incidents would have been lost or misunderstood without some introductory explanation. The attention necessary to unravel a plot prevents us from remarking the beauties of sentiment or poetry, and draws off our attention from humour or character, the chief objects of legitimate comedy. We often read a new play, or one with which we are not acquainted, before going to see it acted. Surprise, which is everything in romance, is the least part of the drama. Our horror at the midnight murders of Macbeth, and our laughter at the falsehoods and facetiousness of Falstaff, are not diminished, but increased, by knowing the issue of the crimes of the one, and the genial festivity of the other. In fact, the sympathy and pleasure so often derived from our knowledge outweighs the gratification of surprise. The Athenians were well aware that Jocasta, in the celebrated drama of Sophocles, was the mother of Œdipus; but the knowledge of this fact, so far from abating the concern of the spectators, as Dryden supposes[264], must have greatly contributed to increase the horror and interest excited by the representation of that amazing tragedy. The celebrated scene of *Iphigenia in Tauris*, between Electra and Orestes, the masterpiece of poetic art and tragic pathos, would lose half its effect if we were not aware that Orestes was the brother of Electra, and if this were reserved as a discovery to surprise the spectators. Indeed, so convinced of all this were the Greek dramatists, that, in many of their plays, as the *Hecuba* and *Hippolytus* of Euripides, the issue of the drama is announced at its commencement.

But, be this as it may, the prologue itself, which is prefixed to the *Rudens*, is eminently beautiful. Arcturus descends as a star from heaven, and opens the piece, somewhat in the manner of the Angel who usually delivers the prologue in the ancient Italian mysteries—of the Mercury who frequently recites it in the early secular dramas, and the Attendant Spirit in the Masque of Comus, who, by way of prologue, declares his office, and the mission which called him to earth. In a manner more consistent with oriental than with either Greek or Roman mythology, Arcturus
[pg 153] represents himself as mingling with mankind during day, in order to observe their actions, and as presenting a record of their good and evil deeds to Jupiter, whom the wicked in vain attempt to appease by sacrifice—

> "Atque hoc scelesti in animum inducunt suum,
> Jovem se placare posse donis, hostiis:
> Et operam et sumptum perdunt." ——

Arcturus having thus satisfactorily accounted for his knowledge of the incidents of the drama, proceeds to unfold the situation of the principal characters. Dæmones, before whose house in Cyrene the scene is laid, had formerly resided at Athens, where his infant daughter had been kidnapped, and had been afterwards purchased by a slave merchant, who brought her to Cyrene. A Greek youth, then living in that town, had become enamoured of her, and having agreed to purchase her, the merchant had consented to meet him and fulfil the bargain at an adjacent temple. But being afterwards persuaded that he could procure a higher price for her in Sicily, the slave-dealer secretly hired a vessel, and set sail, carrying the girl along with him. The ship had scarcely got out to sea when it was overtaken by a dreadful tempest over which Arcturus is figured as presiding. The play opens during the storm, in a manner eminently beautiful and romantic—an excellence which none of the other plays of Plautus possess. Dæmones and his servant are represented as viewing the tempest from land, and pointing out to each other the dangers and various vicissitudes of a boat, in which were seated two damsels who had escaped from the ship, and were trying to gain the shore, which, after many perils, they at length reached. The decorations of this scene are said to have been splendid, and disposed in a very picturesque manner. Madame Dacier conjectures, "that at the farther end of the stage was a prospect of the

sea, intersected by many rocks and cliffs, which projected considerably forward on the stage. On one side the city of Cyrene was represented as at a distance; on the other, the temple of Venus, with a court before it, in the centre of which stood an altar. Adjacent to the temple, and on the same side, was the house of Dæmones, with some scattered cottages in the back ground." Pleusidippus, the lover, comes forward to the temple during the storm, and then goes off in search of Labrax, the slave-merchant, who had likewise escaped from the shipwreck. The damsels, whose situation is highly interesting, having now got on shore, appear among the cliffs,
[pg 154] and after having deplored their misfortunes, they are received into the temple by the priestess of Venus, who reminds them, however, that they should have come clothed in white garments and bringing victims! Here they are discovered by the slave of Pleusidippus, who goes to inform his master. Labrax then approaches to the vicinity of the temple of Venus, and having discovered that the damsels who had saved themselves from the wreck were secreted there, he rushes in to claim and seize them. Thus far the play is lively and well conducted, but the subsequent scenes are too long protracted. They are full of trifling, and are more loaded than those of any other comedy of Plautus, with quaint conceits, the quibbling witticisms, and the scurrilities of slaves. The scene in which Labrax attempts to seize the damsels at the altar, and Dæmones protects them, is insufferably tedious, but terminates at length with the pander being dragged to prison. After this, the fisherman of Dæmones is introduced, congratulating himself on having found a wallet which had been lost from the pander's ship, and contained his money, as well as some effects belonging to the damsels. The ridiculous schemes which he proposes, and the future grandeur he anticipates in consequence of his good fortune, is an excellent satire on the fantastic projects of those who are elevated with a sudden success. Having been observed, however, by the servant of Pleusidippus, who suspected that this wallet contained articles by which Palæstra might discover her parents, a long contest for its possession ensues between them, which might be amusing in the representation, but is excessively tiresome in perusal. This may be also remarked of the scene where their dispute is referred to the arbitration of Dæmones, who apparently is chosen umpire for no other reason than because this was necessary to unravel the plot. Dæmones discovers, from the contents of the wallet, that Palæstra is his daughter. The principal interest being thus exhausted, the remaining scenes become more and more tedious. We feel no great sympathy with the disappointment of the fisherman, and take little amusement in the bargain which he drives with the pander for the restoration of the gold, or his stipulation with his master for a reward, on account of the important service he had been instrumental in rendering him.

This play has been imitated by Ludovico Dolce, in his comedy *Il Ruffiano*, which was published in 1560, and which, the author says in his prologue, was "*vestita di habito antico, e ridrizzato alla forma moderna*." The *Ruffiano* is not a mere translation from the Latin: the language and names are altered, and the scenes frequently transposed. There is likewise introduced the additional
[pg 155] character of the old man Lucretio, father to the lover; also his lying valet Tagliacozzo, and his jealous wife Simona. Lucretio comes from Venice to the town where the scene of the play is laid, to recover a son who had left home in quest of a girl in the possession of Secco the Ruffiano. The first act is occupied with the details of Lucretio's family misfortunes, and it is only in the commencement of the second act that the shipwreck and escape of the damsels are introduced, so that the play opens in a way by no means so interesting and picturesque as the *Rudens* of Plautus. The women having taken refuge in a church, Lucretio offers them shelter in his own house, which exposes them to the rage of his jealous wife Simona. By the assistance, however, of one of these girls, he discovers his lost son, who was her lover; and the recognition of the damsel herself as daughter of Isidoro, who corresponds to the Dæmones of Plautus, is then brought about in the same manner as in the Latin original, and gives rise to the same tedious and selfish disputes among the inferior characters. Madame Riccoboni has also employed the *Rudens* in her comedy *Le Naufrage*.

Stichus—is so called from a slave, who is a principal character in the comedy. The subject is the continued determination of two ladies to persist in their constancy to their husbands, who, from their long absence, without having been heard of, were generally supposed to be dead. In this resolution they remain firm, in spite of the urgency of their fathers to make them enter into second marriages, till at length their conjugal fidelity is rewarded by the safe arrival of their consorts. It would appear that Plautus had not found this subject sufficient to form a complete play; he has accordingly filled up the comic part of the drama with the carousal of Stichus and his fellow slaves, and the stratagems of the parasite Gelasimus, in order to be invited to the entertainments which the husbands prepared in honour of their return.

Trinummus—is taken from the *Thesaurus* of Philemon; but Plautus has changed the original title into Trinummus—a jocular name given to himself by one of the characters hired to carry on a deception, for which he had received three pieces of money, as his reward. The prologue is spoken by two allegorical personages, Luxury, and her daughter Want, the latter of whom had been commissioned by her mother to take up her residence in the house of the prodigal youth Lesbonicus. The play is then opened by a Protatick person, as he is called, who comes to chide his friend Callicles for behaviour which appeared to him in some points incomprehensible; in consequence of which the person accused explains his conduct at once to the spectators and his
[pg 156] angry monitor. It seems Charmides, an Athenian, being obliged to leave his own country on business of importance, intrusted the guardianship of his son and daughter to his friend Callicles. He had also confided to him the management of his affairs, particularly the care of a treasure which was secreted in a concealed part of his dwelling. Lesbonicus, the son of Charmides, being a dissolute youth, had put up the family mansion to sale, and his guardian, in order that the

treasure entrusted to him might not pass into other hands, had purchased the house at a low price. Meanwhile a young man, called Lysiteles, had fallen in love with the daughter of Charmides, and obtained the consent of her brother to his marriage. Her guardian was desirous to give her a portion from the treasure, but does not wish to reveal the secret to her extravagant brother. The person calling himself Trinummus is therefore hired to pretend that he had come as a messenger from the father—to present a forged letter to the son and to feign that he had brought home money for the daughter's portion. While Trinummus is making towards the house, to commence performance of his part, Charmides arrives unexpectedly from abroad, and seeing this Counterfeit approaching his house, immediately accosts him. A highly comic scene ensues, in which the hireling talks of his intimacy with Charmides, and also of being entrusted with his letters and money; and when Charmides at length discovers himself, he treats him as an impostor. The entrance of Charmides into his house is the simple solution of this plot, of which the *nodus* is neither very difficult nor ingenious. This meagre subject is filled up with an amicable contest between Lesbonicus and his sister's lover, concerning her portion,—the latter generously offering to take her without dowry, and the former refusing to give her away on such ignominious terms.

The English translators of Plautus have remarked, that the art of the dramatist in the conduct of this comedy is much to be admired:—"The opening of it," they observe, "is highly interesting; the incidents naturally arise from each other, and the whole concludes happily with the reformation of Lesbonicus, and the marriage of Lysiteles. It abounds with excellent moral reflections, and the same may be said of it with equal justice as of the *Captives*:—

'Ad pudicos mores facta est hæc fabula.' "

On the other hand, none of Plautus' plays is more loaded with improbabilities of that description into which he most readily falls. Thus Stasimus, the slave of Lesbonicus, in order to save a farm
[pg 157] which his master proposed giving as a portion to his sister, persuades the lover's father that a descent to Acheron opened from its surface,—that the cattle which fed on it fell sick,—and that the owners themselves, after a short period, invariably died or hanged themselves. In order to introduce the scene between Charmides and the Counterfeit, the former, though just returned from a sea voyage and a long absence, waits in the street, on the appearance of a stranger, merely from curiosity to know his business; and in the following scene the slave Stasimus, after expressing the utmost terror for the lash on account of his tarrying so long, still loiters to propound a series of moral maxims, inconsistent with his character and situation.

The plot of the *Dowry* of Giovam-maria Cecchi is precisely the same with that of the *Trinummus*; but that dramatist possessed a wonderful art of giving an air of originality to his closest imitations, by the happy adaptation of ancient subjects to Italian manners. The *Tresor Caché* of Destouches is almost translated from the *Trinummus*, only he has brought forward on the stage Hortense, the Prodigal's sister, and has added the character of Julie, the daughter of the absent father's friend, of whom the Prodigal himself is enamoured. In this comedy the character of the two youths are meant to be contrasted, and are more strongly brought out in the imitation, from both of them being in love. A German play, entitled *Schatz*, by the celebrated dramatist Lessing, is also borrowed from this Latin original. The scene, too, in *Trinummus*, between Charmides and the counterfeit messenger, has given rise to one in the *Suppositi* of Ariosto, and through that medium to another in Shakspeare's *Taming of the Shrew*, where, when it is found necessary for the success of Lucentio's stratagem at Padua, that some one should personate his father, the *pedant* is employed for this purpose. Meanwhile, the father himself unexpectedly arrives at Padua, and a comical scene in consequence passes between them.

Truculentus—is so called from a morose and clownish servant, who, having accompanied his master from the country to Rome, inveighs against the depraved morals of that city, and especially against Phronesium, the courtezan by whom his master had been enticed. His churlish disposition, however, is only exhibited in a single scene. On the sole other occasion on which he is introduced, he is represented as having become quite mild and affable. For this change no reason is assigned, but it is doubtless meant to be understood that he had meanwhile been soothed and wheedled by the arts of some courtezan. The characters, however, of the
[pg 158] Truculentus and his rustic master, have little to do with the main plot of the drama, which is chiefly occupied with the fate of the lovers, whom Phronesium enticed to their ruin. When she had consumed the wealth of the infatuated Dinarchus, she lays her snares for Stratophanes, the Babylonian captain, to whom she pretends to have borne a son, in order that she may prey on him with more facility. This drama is accordingly occupied with her feigned pregnancy, her counterfeited solicitude, and her search for a supposititious child, to which she persuades her dupe that she had given birth, but which afterwards proves to be the child of her former lover Dinarchus, by a young lady to whom he had been betrothed.

In the first act of this play an account is given of the mysteries of a courtezan's occupation, which, with a passage near the commencement of the *Mostellaria*, and a few fragments of Alexis, a writer of the middle comedy, gives us some insight into the practices by which they entrapped and seduced, their lovers, by whom they appear to have been maintained in prodigious state and splendour. In a play of Terence, one of the characters, talking of the train of a courtezan, says,

"Ducitur familia tota,
Vestispicæ, unctor, auri custos, flabelliferæ, sandaligerulæ,
Cantrices, cistellatrices, nuncii, renuncii[265]."

The Greek courtezan possessed attainments, which the more virtuous of her sex were neither expected nor permitted to acquire. On her the education which was denied to a spotless woman, was carefully bestowed. To sing, to dance, to play on the lyre and the lute, were accomplishments in which the courtezan was, from her earliest years, completely instructed. The habits of private life afforded ample opportunity for the display of such acquirements, as the charm of convivial meetings among the Greeks was thought imperfect, unless the enjoyments were brightened by a display of the talents which belonged exclusively to the Wanton. But though these refinements alone were sufficient to excite the highest admiration of the Greek youth, unaccustomed as they were to female society, and often procured a splendid establishment for the accomplished courtezan, some of that class embraced a much wider range of education; and having added to their attainments in the fine arts, a knowledge of philosophy and the powers of eloquence, they became, thus trained and educated, the companions of orators, statesmen, and poets. The arrival of Aspasia at Athens is said to have produced a change in the manners of that city, and to have
[pg 159] formed a new and remarkable epoch in the history of society. The class to which she belonged was of more political importance in Athens than in any other state of Greece; and though I scarcely believe that the Peloponnesian war had its origin in the wrongs of Aspasia, the Athenian courtezans, with their various interests, were often alluded to in grave political harangues, and they were considered as part of the establishment of the state. Above all, the comic poets were devoted to their charms, were conversant with their manners, and often experienced their rapacity and infidelity; for, being unable to support them in their habits of expense, an opulent old man, or dissolute youth, was in consequence frequently preferred. The passion of Menander for Glycerium is well known, and Diphilus, from whom Plautus borrowed his *Rudens*, consorted with Gnathena, celebrated as one of the most lively and luxurious of Athenian Charmers[266]. Accordingly, many of the plays of the new comedy derive their names from celebrated courtezans; but it does not appear, from the fragments which remain, that they were generally represented in a favourable light, or in their meridian splendour of beauty and accomplishments[267]. In the Latin plays, the courtezans are not drawn so highly gifted in point of talents, or even beauty, as might be expected; but it was necessary to paint them as elegant, fascinating, and expensive, in order to account for the infatuation and ruin of their lovers. The Greeks and Romans were alike strangers to the polite gallantry of Modern Europe, and to the enthusiastic love which chivalry is said to have inspired in the middle ages. Thus their hearts and senses were left unprotected, to become the prey of such women as the Phronesium of the *Truculentus*, who is a picture of the most rapacious and debauched of her class, and whose vices are neither repented of, nor receive punishment, at the conclusion of the drama. Dinarchus may be regarded as a representation of the most profligate of the Greek or Roman youth, yet he is not held up to any particular censure; and, in the end, he is neither reformed nor adequately punished. The portion, indeed, of the lady whom he had violated, and at last agrees to espouse, is threatened by her father to be diminished, but this seems merely said in a momentary fit of resentment.

This play, with all its imperfections, is said to have been a great favourite of the author[268]; and was a very popular comedy at Rome. It has descended to us rather in a mutilated state, which
[pg 160] may, perhaps, have deprived us of some fine sentences or witticisms, which the ancients had admired; for, as a French translator of Plautus has remarked, their approbation could scarcely have been founded on the interest of the subject, the disposition of the incidents, or the moral which is inculcated.

The character of Lolpoop, the servant of Belfond Senior, in Shadwell's *Squire of Alsatia*, has been evidently formed on that of the Truculentus, in this comedy. His part, however, as in the original, is chiefly episodical; and the principal plot, as shall be afterwards shown, has been founded on the *Adelphi* of Terence.

The above-mentioned plays are the twenty dramas of Plautus, which are still extant. But, besides these, a number of comedies, now lost, have been attributed to him. Aulus Gellius[269] mentions, that there were about a hundred and thirty plays, which, in his age, passed under the name of Plautus; and of these, nearly forty titles, with a few scattered fragments, still remain. From the time of Varro to that of Aulus Gellius, it seems to have been a subject of considerable discussion what plays were genuine; and it appears, that the best informed critics had come to the conclusion, that a great proportion of those comedies, which vulgarly passed for the productions of Plautus, were spurious. Such a vast number were probably ascribed to him, from his being the head and founder of a great dramatic school; so that those pieces, which he had perhaps merely retouched, came to be wholly attributed to his pen. As in the schools of painting, so in the dramatic art, a celebrated master may have disciples who adopt his principles. He may give the plan which they fill up, or complete what they have imperfectly executed. Many paintings passed under the name of Raphael, of which Julio Romano, and others, were the chief artists. "There is no doubt," says Aulus Gellius, "but that those plays, which seem not to have been written by Plautus, but are ascribed to him, were by certain ancient poets, and afterwards retouched and polished by him[270]." Even those comedies which were written in the same taste with his, came to be termed *Fabulæ Plautinæ*, in the same way as we still speak of Æsopian fable, and Homeric verse. "Plautus quidem," says Macrobius, "ea re clarus fuit, ut post mortem ejus, comœdiæ, quæ incertæ ferebantur, Plautinæ tamen esse, de jocorum copia, agnoscerentur[271]." It is thus evident, that a sufficient number of jests stamped a dramatic piece as the production of Plautus in the
[pg 161] opinion of the multitude. But Gellius farther mentions, that there was a certain writer of comedies, whose name was Plautius, and whose plays having the inscription "Plauti," were considered as by Plautus, and were named Plautinæ from Plautus, though in fact they ought to

have been called Plautianæ from Plautius. All this sufficiently accounts for the vast number of plays ascribed to Plautus, and which the most learned and intelligent critics have greatly restricted. They have differed, however, very widely, as to the number which they have admitted to be genuine. Some, says Servius, maintain, that Plautus wrote twenty-one comedies, others forty, others a hundred[272]. Gellius informs us, that Lucius Ælius, a most learned man, was of opinion that not more than twenty-five were of his composition[273]. Varro wrote a work, entitled *Quæstiones Plautinæ*, a considerable portion of which was devoted to a discussion concerning the authenticity of the plays commonly assigned to Plautus, and the result of his investigation was, that twenty-one were unquestionably to be admitted as genuine. These were subsequently termed Varronian, in consequence of having been separated by Varro from the remainder, as no way doubtful, and universally allowed to be by Plautus. The twenty-one Varronian plays are the twenty still extant, and the *Vidularia*. This comedy appears to have been originally subjoined to the Palatine MS. of the still existing plays of Plautus, but to have been torn off, since, at the conclusion of the *Truculentus*, we find the words "Vidularia incipit[274]:" And Mai has recently published some fragments of it, which he found in an Ambrosian MS. Such, it would appear, had been the high authority of Varro, that only those plays, which had received his indubitable sanction, were transcribed in the MSS. as the genuine works of Plautus; yet it would seem that Varro himself had, on some occasion, assented to the authenticity of several others, induced by their style of humour corresponding to that of Plautus. He had somewhere mentioned, that the *Saturio* (the Glutton,) and the *Addictus*, (the Adjudged,) were written by Plautus during the period in which he laboured as a slave at the hand-mill. He was also of opinion, that the *Bœotia* was by Plautus; and Aulus Gellius concurs with him in this[275], citing certain verses delivered by a
[pg 162] hungry parasite, which, he says, are perfectly Plautinian, and must satisfy every person to whom Plautus is familiar, of the authenticity of that drama. From this very passage, Osannus derives an argument unfavourable to the authenticity of the play. The parasite exclaims against the person who first distinguished hours, and set up the sun-dials, of which the town was so full. Now, Osannus maintains, that there were no sun-dials at Rome in the time of Plautus, and that the day was not then distributed into hours, but into much larger portions of time[276]. The *Nervolaria* was one of the disputed plays in the time of Au. Gellius; and also the *Fretum*, which Gellius thinks the most genuine of all[277]. Varro, in the first Book of his *Quæstiones Plautinæ* gives the following words of Attius, which, I presume, are quoted from his work on poetry and poets, entitled *Didascalica*. "For neither were the *Gemini*, the *Leones*, the *Condalium*, the *Anus Plauti*, the *Bis Compressa*, the *Bœotia*, or the *Commorientes*, by Plautus, but by M. Aquilius." It appears, however, from the prologue to the *Adelphi* of Terence, that the *Commorientes* was written by Plautus, having been taken by him from a Greek comedy of Diphilus[278]. In opposition to the above passage of Attius, and to his own opinion expressed in the *Quæstiones Plautinæ*, Varro, in his treatise on the Latin Language, frequently cites, as the works of Plautus, the plays enumerated by Attius, and various others; but this was probably in deference to common opinion, or in agreement with ordinary language, and was not intended to contradict what he had elsewhere delivered, or to stamp with the character of authenticity productions, which he had more deliberately pronounced to be spurious[279].

From the review which has now been given of the comedies of Plautus, something may have been gathered of their general scope and tenor. In each plot there is sufficient action, movement, and spirit. The incidents never flag, but rapidly accelerate the catastrophe. Yet, if we regard his plays in the mass, there is a considerable, and perhaps too great, uniformity in their fables. They hinge, for the most part, on the love of some dissolute youth for a courtezan, his employment of a slave to defraud a father of a sum sufficient to supply his expensive pleasures, and the final discovery
[pg 163] that his mistress is a free-born citizen. The charge against Plautus of uniformity in his characters, as well as in his fables, has been echoed without much consideration. The portraits of Plautus, it must be remembered, were drawn or copied at a time when the division of labour and progress of refinement had not yet given existence to those various descriptions of professions and artists—the doctor, author, attorney—in short, all those characters, whose habits, singularities, and whims, have supplied the modern Thalia with such diversified materials, and whose contrasts give to each other such relief, that no caricature is required in any individual representation. The characters of Alcmena, Euclio, and Periplectomenes, are sufficiently novel, and are not repeated in any of the other dramas; but there is ample range and variety even in those which he has most frequently employed—the avaricious old man—the debauched young fellow—the knavish slave—the braggart captain—the rapacious courtezan—the obsequious parasite—and the shameless pander. On most of these parts some observations have been made, while mentioning the different comedies in which they are introduced. The severe father and thoughtless youth, are those in which he has best succeeded, or at least they are those with which we are best pleased. The captain always appears to us exaggerated, and the change which has taken place in society and manners prevents us, perhaps, from entering fully into the characters of the slave, the parasite, and pander; but in the fathers and sons, he has shown his knowledge of our common nature, and delineated them with the truest and liveliest touches. In the former, the struggles of avarice and severity, with paternal affection, are finely wrought up and blended. Even when otherwise respectable characters, they are always represented as disliking their wives, which was not inconsistent with the manners of a Grecian state, in which marriage was merely regarded as a duty; and was a feature naturally enough exhibited on the theatre of a nation, one of whose most illustrious characters declared in the Senate, as a received maxim, that Romans married, not for the sake of domestic happiness, but to rear up soldiers for the republic.

The Latin style of Plautus excels in briskness of dialogue, as well as purity of expression, and has

been highly extolled by the learned Roman grammarians, particularly by Varro, who declares, that if the Muses were to speak Latin they would employ his diction[280]; but as M. Schlegel has remarked, it is necessary to distinguish between the opinion of philologers, and that of critics and
[pg 164] poets. Plautus wrote at a period when his country as yet possessed no written or literary language. Every phrase was drawn from the living source of conversation. This early simplicity seemed pleasing and artless to those Romans, who lived in an age of excessive refinement and cultivation; but this apparent merit was rather accidental than the effect of poetic art. Making, however, some allowance for this, there can be no doubt that Plautus wonderfully improved and refined the Latin language from the rude form in which it had been moulded by Ennius. That he should have effected such an alteration is not a little remarkable. Plautus was nearly contemporary with the Father of Roman song—according to most accounts he was born a slave—he was condemned, during part of his life, to the drudgery of the lowest manual labour—and, so far as we learn, he was not distinguished by the patronage of the Great, or admitted into Patrician society. Ennius, on the other hand, if he did not pass his life in affluence, spent it in the exercise of an honourable profession, and was the chosen familiar friend of Cato, Scipio Africanus, Fulvius Nobilior, and Lælius, the most learned as well as polished citizens of the Roman republic, whose conversation in their unrestrained intercourse must have bestowed on him advantages which Plautus never enjoyed. But perhaps the circumstance of his Greek original, which contributed so much to his learning and refinement, and qualified him for such exalted society, may have been unfavourable to that native purity of Latin diction, which the Umbrian slave imbibed from the unmixed fountains of conversation and nature.

The chief excellence of Plautus is generally reputed to consist in the wit and comic force of his dialogue; and, accordingly, the lines in Horace's *Art of Poetry*, in which he derides the ancient Romans for having foolishly admired the "*Plautinos sales*," has been the subject of much reprehension among critics[281]. That the wit of Plautus often degenerates into buffoonery, scurrility, and quibbles,—sometimes even into obscenity,—and that, in his constant attempts at merriment, he too often tries to excite laughter by exaggerated expressions, as well as by
[pg 165] extravagant actions, cannot, indeed, be denied. This, I think, was partly owing to the immensity of the Roman theatres, and to the masks and trumpets of the actors, which must have rendered caricature and grotesque inventions essential to the production of that due effect, which, with such scenic apparatus, could not be created, unless by overstepping the modesty of nature. It must be always be recollected, that the plays of Plautus were written solely to be represented, and not to be read. Even in modern times, and subsequently to the invention of printing, the greatest dramatists—Shakspeare, for example—cared little about the publication of their plays; and in every age or country, in which dramatic poetry has flourished, it has been intended for public representation, and has been adapted to the taste of a promiscuous audience. It is the most social of all sorts of composition; and he who aims at popularity or success in it, must leave the solitudes of inspiration for the bustle of the world.

The contemplative poet may find his delight, and his reward, in the mere effort of imagination, but the poet of the drama must seek them in the applause of the multitude. He must stoop to men—be the mover of human hearts—and triumph by the living and hourly passions of our nature. Now, in the days of Plautus, the smiles of the polite critic were not enough for a Latin comedian, because in those days there were few polite critics at Rome; he required the shouts and laughter of the multitude, who could be fully gratified only by the broadest grins of comedy. Accordingly, many of the jests of Plautus are such as might be expected from a writer anxious to accommodate himself to the taste of the times, and naturally catching the spirit of ribaldry which prevailed.

During the age of Plautus, and indeed long after it, the general character of Roman wit consisted rather in a rude and not very liberal satire, than a just and temperate ridicule, restrained within the bounds of decency and good manners. A favourite topic, for example, of ancient raillery, was corporal defects;—a decisive proof of coarseness of humour, especially as it was recommended by rule, and enforced by the authority of the greatest masters, as one of the most legitimate sources of ridicule.—"Est deformitatis et corporis vitiorum satis bella materies ad jocandum," says Cicero, in his treatise *De Oratore*[282]. The innumerable jests there recorded as having produced the happiest effects at the bar, are the most miserable puns and quibbles, coarse practical jokes, or personal reflections. The cause of this defect in elegance of wit and raillery, has been attributed by Hurd to the free and popular constitution of Rome. This, by placing all its citizens, at least
[pg 166] during certain periods, on a level, and diffusing a general spirit of independence, took off those restraints of civility which are imposed by the dread of displeasing, and which can alone curb the licentiousness of ridicule. The only court to be paid was from the orators to the people, in the continual and immediate applications to them which were rendered necessary by the form of government. On such occasions, the popular assemblies had to be entertained with those gross banters, which were likely to prove most acceptable to them. Design growing into habit, the orators, and after them the nation, accustomed themselves to coarse ridicule at all times, till the humour passed from the rostrum, or forum, to the theatre, where the amusement and laughter of the people being the direct and immediate aim, it was heightened to still farther extravagance. This taste, says Hurd, was also fostered and promoted at Rome by the festal license which prevailed in the seasons of the Bacchanalia and Saturnalia[283]. Quintilian thinks, that, with some regulation, those days of periodical license might have aided the cultivation of a correct spirit of raillery; but, as it was, they tended to vitiate and corrupt it. The Roman muse, too, had been nurtured amid satiric and rustic exhibitions, the remembrance of which was still cherished, and a recollection of them kept alive, by the popular *Exodia* and *Fabulæ Atellanæ*.

Such being the taste of the audience whom he had to please, and who crowded to the theatre not to acquire purity of taste, but to relax their minds with merriment and jest, it became the great object of Plautus to make his audience laugh; and for this he sacrificed every other consideration. “Nec quicquam,” says Scaliger, “veritus est, modo auditorem excitaret risu.” With this view, he must have felt that he was more likely to succeed by emulating the broader mirth of the old or middle comedy, than by the delicate railleries and exquisite painting of Menander. Accordingly, though he generally borrowed his plots from the writers of the new comedy, his wit and humour have more the relish of the old, and they have been classed by Cicero as of the same description with the drollery which enlivened its scenes[284]. The audience, for whom the plays of Plautus were written, could understand or enjoy only a representation of the manners and witticisms to which
[pg 167] they were accustomed. To the fastidious critics of the court of Augustus, an admirer of Plautus might have replied in the words of Antiphanes, a Greek dramatist of the middle comedy, who being commanded to read one of his plays to Alexander the Great, and finding that the production was not relished by the royal critic, thus addressed him: “I cannot wonder that you disapprove of my comedy, for he who could be entertained by it must have been present at the scenes it represents. *He must be acquainted with the public humours of our vulgar ordinaries*—have been familiar with the impure manners of our courtezans—a party in the breaking up of many a brothel—and a sufferer, as well as actor, in those unseemly riots. Of all these things you are not informed; and the fault lies more in my presumption in intruding them on your hearing, than in any want of fidelity with which I have portrayed them[285].”

Indeed, this practice of consulting the tastes of the people, if it be a fault, is one which is common to all comic writers. Aristophanes, who was gifted with far higher powers than Plautus, and who was no less an elegant poet than a keen satirist, as is evinced by the lyric parts of his *Frogs*, often prostituted his talents to the lowest gratifications of the multitude. Shakspeare regarded the drama as entirely a thing for the people, and treated it as such throughout. He took the popular comedy as he found it; and whatever enlargements or improvements he introduced on the stage, were still calculated and contrived according to the spirit of his predecessors, and the taste of a London audience. When, in Charles’s days, a ribald taste became universal in England, “unhappy Dryden” bowed down his genius to the times. Even in the refined age of Louis XIV., it was said of the first comic genius of his country, that he would have attained the perfection of his art,

> “*Si moins ami du peuple* en ses doctes peintures,
> Il n’eût point fait souvent grimacer ses figures,
> Quitte, pour le bouffon, l’agreable et le fin,
> Et, sans honte, a Terence allié Tabarin.”
>
> Boileau.

Lopez de Vega, in his *Arte de hacer Comedias*, written, in 1609, at the request of a poetical academy, and containing a code of laws for the modern drama, admits, that when he was about to write a comedy, he laid aside all dramatic precepts, and wrote solely for the vulgar, who had to pay for their amusement:

[pg 168]
> “Quando he de escribir una comedia,
> Encierro los preceptos con seis llaves;
> Saco a Terencio y Plauto de mi studio
> Para que no den voces, porque suele
> Dar gritos la verdad en libios mudos;
> Y escribo por el arte que inventaron
> Los que el vulgar aplauso pretendieron,
> Porque como los paga el vulgo, es justo
> Hablarle in necio para darle gusto.”

His indulgent conformity, however, to the unpolished taste of his age, ought not to be admitted as an excuse for the obscenities which Plautus has introduced. But though it must be confessed, that he is liable to some censure in this particular, he is not nearly so culpable as has been generally imagined. The commentators, indeed, have been often remarkably industrious in finding out allusions, which do not consist very clearly with the plain and obvious meaning of the context. The editor of the Delphin Plautus has not rejected above five pages from the twenty plays on this account; and many passages even in those could hardly offend the most scrupulous reader. Some of the comedies, indeed, as the *Captivi* and *Trinummus*, are free from any moral objection; and, with the exception of the *Casina*, none of them are so indelicate as many plays of Massinger and Ford, in the time of James I., or Etheridge and Shadwell, during the reigns of Charles II. and his successor.

It being the great aim of Plautus to excite the merriment of the rabble, he, of course, was little anxious about the strict preservation of the dramatic unities; and it was a more important object with him to bring a striking scene into view, than to preserve the unity of place. In the *Aulularia*, part of the action is laid in the miser’s dwelling, and part in the various places where he goes to conceal his treasure: in the *Mostellaria* and *Truculentus*, the scene changes from the street to apartments in different houses.

But, notwithstanding these and other irregularities, Plautus so enchanted the people by the drollery of his wit, and the buffoonery of his scenes, that he continued the reigning favourite of the stage long after the more correct plays of Cæcilius, Afranius, and even Terence, were first represented.

who was originally a slave, acquired this name with his freedom, having been at first called by
[pg 169] the servile appellation of Statius[286]. He was a native of Milan, and flourished towards the end of the sixth century of Rome, having survived Ennius, whose intimate friend he was, about one year, which places his death in 586. We learn from the prologue to the *Hecyra* of Terence, spoken in the person of Ambivius, the principal actor, or rather manager of the theatre, that, when he first brought out the plays of Cæcilius, some were hissed off the stage, and others hardly stood their ground; but knowing the fluctuating fortunes of dramatic exhibitions, he had again attempted to bring them forward. His perseverance having obtained for them a full and unprejudiced hearing, they failed not to please; and this success excited the author to new efforts in the poetic art, which he had nearly abandoned in a fit of despondency. The comedies of Cæcilius, which amounted to thirty, are all lost, so that our opinion of their merits can be formed only from the criticisms of those Latin authors who wrote before they had perished. Cicero blames the improprieties of his style and language[287]. From Horace's Epistle to Augustus, we may collect what was the popular sentiment concerning Cæcilius—

"Vincere Cæcilius gravitate—Terentius arte."

It is not easy to see how a comic author could be more grave than Terence; and the quality applied to a writer of this cast appears of rather difficult interpretation. But the opinion which had been long before given by Varro affords a sort of commentary on Horace's expression—"In argumentis," says he, "Cæcilius palmam poscit; in ethesi Terentius." By *gravitas*, therefore, as applied to Cæcilius, we may properly enough understand the grave and affecting plots of his comedies; which is farther confirmed by what Varro elsewhere observes of him—"*Pathe* Trabea, Attilius, et Cæcilius facile moverunt." Velleius Paterculus joins him with Terence and Afranius, whom he reckons the most excellent comic writers of Rome—"Dulcesque Latini leporis facetiæ per Cæcilium, Terentiumque, et Afranium, sub pari ætate, nituerunt[288]."

A great many of the plays of Cæcilius were taken from Menander; and Aulus Gellius informs us that they seemed agreeable and pleasing enough, till, being compared with their Greek models, they appeared quite tame and disgusting, and the wit of the original, which they were unable to
[pg 170] imitate, totally vanished[289]. He accordingly contrasts a scene in the *Plocius* (or Necklace,) of Cæcilius, with the corresponding scene in Menander, and pronounces them to be as different in brightness and value as the arms of Diomed and Glaucus. The scenes compared are those where an old husband complains that his wife, who was rich and ugly, had obliged him to sell a handsome female slave, of whom she was jealous. This chapter of Aulus Gellius is very curious, as it gives us a more perfect notion than we obtain from any other writer, of the mode in which the Latin comic poets copied the Greeks. To judge from this single comparison, it appears that though the Roman dramatists imitated the incidents, and caught the ideas of their great masters, their productions were not entirely translations or slavish versions: A different turn is frequently given to a thought—the sentiments are often differently expressed, and sometimes much is curtailed, or altogether omitted.

AFRANIUS,

though he chose Roman subjects, whence his comedies were called *Togatæ*, was an imitator of the manner of Menander—

"Dicitur Afranî toga convenisse Menandro."

Indeed he himself admits, in his *Compitales*, that he derived many even of his plots from Menander and other Greek writers—

"Fateor, sumpsi non a Menandro modo,
Sed ut quisque habuit, quod conveniret mihi;
Quod me non posse melius facere credidi."

Cicero[290] calls Afranius an ingenious and eloquent writer. Ausonius, in one of his epigrams, talks "*facundi Afrani*." He is also praised by Quintilian, who censures him, however, for the flagitious amours which he represented on the stage[291], on account of which, perhaps, his writings were
[pg 171] condemned to the flames by Pope Gregory I. The titles of forty-six of his plays have been collected by Fabricius, and a few fragments have been edited by Stephens. One of these, in the play entitled *Sella*, where it is said that wisdom is the child of experience and memory, has been commended by Aulus Gellius, and is plausibly conjectured[292] to have been introduced in a prologue spoken in the person of Wisdom herself—

"Usus me genuit, mater peperit Memoria:

Sophiam vocant me Graii; vos Sapientiam."

The following lines from the *Vopiscum* have also been frequently quoted:

"Si possent homines delinimentis capi,
Omnes haberent nunc amatores anus.
Ætas, et corpus tenerum, et morigeratio,
Hæc sunt venena formosarum mulierum[293]."

LUSCIUS LAVINIUS,

also a follower of Menander, was the contemporary and enemy of Terence, who, in his prologues, has satirized his injudicious translations from the Greek—

"Qui bene, vertendo et eas describendo male,
Ex Græcis bonis, Latinas fecit non bonas[294]."

In particular, we learn from the prologue to the *Phormio*, that he was fond of bringing on the stage frantic youths, committing all those excesses of folly and distraction which are supposed to be produced by violent love. Donatus has afforded us an account of the plot of his *Phasma*, which was taken from Menander. A lady, who, before marriage, had a daughter, the fruit of a secret amour with a person now living in a house adjacent to her husband's, made an opening in the wall of her own dwelling, in order to communicate with that in which her former paramour and daughter resided. That this entrance might appear a consecrated spot to her husband's family, she decked it with garlands, and shaded it with branches of trees. To this passage she daily
[pg 172] repaired as if to pay her devotions, but in fact, to procure interviews with her illegitimate daughter. Her husband also had, by a former wife, a son, who dwelt in his father's house, and who, having one day accidentally peeped through the aperture, beheld the girl; and, as she was possessed of almost supernatural beauty, he was struck with awe, as at the sight of a Spirit or divinity, whence the play received the name of *Phasma*. The young man, discovering at length that she is a mortal, conceives for her a violent passion, and is finally united to her, with the consent of his father, and to the great satisfaction of the mother. There is another play of Menander, which has also been closely imitated by Luscius Lavinius. Plautus, we have seen, borrowed his *Trinummus* from the *Thesaurus* of Philemon. But Menander also wrote a *Thesaurus*, which has been copied by Lavinius. An old man, by his last will, had commanded, that, ten years after his death, his son should carry libations to the monument under which he was to be interred. The youth, having squandered his fortune, sold the ground on which this monument stood to an old miser. At the end of ten years, the prodigal sent a servant to the tomb with due offerings, according to the injunctions of his deceased father. The servant applied to the new proprietor to assist him in opening the monument, in which they discovered a hoard of gold. The miserly owner of the soil seized the treasure, and retained it on pretence of having deposited it there for safety during a period of public commotion. It is claimed, however, by the young man, who goes to law with him; and the plot of the comedy chiefly consists in the progress of the suit[295]—the dramatic management of which has been ridiculed by Terence, in the prologue to the *Eunuchus*, since, contrary to the custom and rules of all courts of justice, the author had introduced the defendant pleading his title to the treasure before the plaintiff had explained his pretensions, and entered on the grounds of his demand. Part of the old Scotch ballad, The Heir of Linne, has a curious resemblance to the plot of this play of Luscius Lavinius.

Turpilius, Trabea, and Attilius, were the names of comic writers who lived towards the end of the sixth and beginning of the seventh century, from the building of Rome. Of these, and other contemporary dramatists, it would now be difficult to say more than that their works have perished, and to repeat a few scattered incidental criticisms delivered by Varro or Cicero. To them probably may be attributed the *Baccharia*, *Cæcus*, *Cornicularia*, *Parasitus*, and innumerable
[pg 173] other comedies, of which the names have been preserved by grammarians. Of such works, once the favourites of the Roman stage, few memorials survive, and these only to be found separate and imperfect in the quotations of scholiasts. Sometimes from a single play numerous passages have been preserved; but they are so detached, that they neither give us any insight into the fable to which they appertain, nor enable us to pronounce on the excellence of the dramatic characters. In general, they comprise so small a portion of uninterrupted dialogue, that we can scarcely form a judgment even of the style and manner of the poet, or of the beauty of his versification. All that is now valuable in these fragments is a few brief moral maxims, and some examples of that *vis comica*, which consists in an ingenious and forcible turn of expression in the original language.

It is not difficult to account for the vast number of dramatic productions which we thus see were brought forward at Rome in the early ages of the Republic. There are two ways in which literature may be supported,—By the patronage of distinguished individuals, as it was in the time of Mæcenas and the age of Lorenzo de Medici; or, By the encouragement of a great literary public, as it is now rewarded in modern Europe. But, in Rome, literature as yet had not obtained

the protection of an emperor or a favourite minister; and previous to the invention of printing, which alone could give extensive circulation to his productions, a poet could hardly gain a livelihood by any means, except by supplying popular entertainments for the stage. These were always liberally paid for by the Ædiles, or other directors of the public amusements. To this species of composition, accordingly, the poet directed his almost undivided attention; and a prodigious facility was afforded to his exertions by the inexhaustible dramatic stores which he found prepared for him in Greece.

TRABEA.

The plays of Quintus Trabea, supposed to belong chiefly to the class called *Togatæ*, are frequently cited by the grammarians, and are mentioned with approbation by Cicero. He in particular commends the lines where this poet so agreeably describes the credulity and overweening satisfaction of a lover—

> "Tantâ lætitiâ auctus sum ut mihi non constem:
> Nunc demum mihi animus ardet.
> Lena, delinita argento, nutum observabit meum—
> Quid velim quid studeam: adveniens digito impellam januam:
> [pg 174] Fores patebunt—de improviso Chrysis, ubi me aspexit,
> Alacris obviam mihi veniet, complexum exoptans meum;
> Mihi se dedet.—Fortunam ipsam anteibo fortunis meis[296]."

The name of Trabea was made use of in a well known deception practised on Joseph Scaliger by Muretus. Scaliger piqued himself on his faculty of distinguishing the characteristic styles of ancient writers. In order to entrap him, Muretus showed him some verses, pretending that he had received them from Germany, where they had been transcribed from an ancient MS. attributed to Q. Trabea—

> "Here, si querelis, ejulatu, fletibus,
> Medicina fieret miseriis mortalium,
> Auro parandæ lachrymæ contra forent:
> Nunc hæc ad minuenda mala non magis valent
> Quam Nænia præficæ ad excitandos mortuos:
> Res turbidæ consilium, non fletum, expetunt[297]."

Scaliger was so completely deceived, that he afterwards cited these verses, as lines from the play of *Harpace*, by Q. Trabea, in the first edition of his Commentary on Varro's Dialogues *De Re Rustica*, in order to illustrate some obscure expression of his author—"Quis enim," says he, "tam aversus a Musis, tamque humanitatis expers, qui horum publicatione offendatur." Muretus, not content with this malicious trick, afterwards sent him some other verses, to which he affixed the name of Attius, expressing, but more diffusely, the same idea. Scaliger, in his next edition of Varro, published them, along with the former lines, as fragments from the *Œnomaus*, a tragedy by Attius, and a plagiarism from Trabea—observing, at the end of his note, "Fortasse de hoc nimis." Muretus said nothing for two years; but, at the end of that period, he published a volume of his own Latin poems, and, along with them, under the title *Afflicta Trabeæ*, both sets of verses
[pg 175] which he had thus palmed on Scaliger for undoubted remnants of antiquity. The whole history of the imposture was fully disclosed in a note: Both poems, it was acknowledged, were versions of a fragment, attributed by some to Menander, and by others to Philemon, beginning,—Ει τα δακρυα ἡμιν, κ.τ.λ. They have been also translated into Latin by Naugerius[298].

The progress of time, the ravages of war, and the intervention of a period of barbarism, which have deprived us of so many dramatic works of the Romans, have fortunately spared six plays of

TERENCE,

which are perhaps the most valuable remains that have descended to us among the works of antiquity. This celebrated dramatist, the delight and ornament of the Roman stage, was born at Carthage, about the 560th year of Rome. In what manner he came or was brought thither is uncertain. He was, in early youth, the freedman of one Terentius Lucanus in that city, whose name has been perpetuated only by the glory of his slave. After he had obtained his freedom, he became the friend of Lælius, and of the younger Scipio Africanus[299]. His *Andria* was not acted till the year 587—two years, according to the Eusebian Chronicle, after the death of Cæcilius; which unfortunately throws some doubt on the agreeable anecdote recorded by Donatus, of his introduction, in a wretched garb, into the house of Cæcilius, in order to read his comedy to that

poet, by whom, as a mean person, he was seated on a low stool, till he astonished him with the matchless grace and elegance of the *Andria*, when he was placed on the couch, and invited to partake the supper of the veteran dramatist. Several writers have conjectured, it might be to another than to Cæcilius that Terence read his comedy[300]; or, as the *Andria* is not indisputably his first comedy, that it might be one of the others which he read to Cæcilius[301]. Supposing the Eusebian Chronicle to be accurate in the date which it fixes for the death of Cæcilius, it is just
[pg 176] possible, that Terence may have written and read to him his *Andria* two years previous to its representation. After he had given six comedies to the stage, Terence left Rome for Greece, whence he never returned. The manner of his death, however, is altogether uncertain. According to one report, he perished at sea, while on his voyage from Greece to Italy, bringing with him an hundred and eight comedies, which he had translated from Menander: according to other accounts, he died in Arcadia for grief at the loss of those comedies, which he had sent before him by sea to Rome. In whatever way it was occasioned, his death happened when he was at the early age of thirty-four, and in the year 594 from the building of the city.

Andria,—acted in 587, is the first in point of time, and is usually accounted the first in merit, of the productions of Terence. Like most of his other comedies, it has a double plot. It is compounded of the *Andrian* and *Perinthian* of Menander; but it does not appear, that Terence took his principal plot from one of those Greek plays, and the under-plot from the other. He employed both to form his chief fable; and added the characters, on which the under plot is founded, from his own invention, or from some third play now unknown to us.

At the commencement of the play, Simo, the father of Pamphilus, informs Sosia of his son’s love for Glycerium. In consequence of a report of this attachment spreading abroad, Chremes refuses his daughter, who had previously been promised to Pamphilus in marriage: Simo, however, still pretends to make preparations for the nuptials, in order more accurately to ascertain the state of his son’s affections. Charinus, the lover of Chremes’ daughter, is in despair at the prospect of this union; but he is comforted by the assurances of Pamphilus, that he would do every thing in his power to retard it. By this time, Davus, the slave of Pamphilus, discovers, that it is not intended his master’s marriage should in reality proceed; and, perceiving it is a pretext, he advises Pamphilus to declare that he is ready to obey his father’s commands. Glycerium, meanwhile, gives birth to a child; but Simo believes, that her reported delivery was a stratagem of Davus, to deter Chremes from acceding to his daughter’s marriage with Pamphilus. Simo, however, at length prevails on him to give his consent. Pamphilus is thus placed in a most perplexing dilemma with all parties. His mistress, Glycerium, and her attendants, believe him to be false; while Charinus thinks that he had deceived him; and, as he had given his consent to the marriage, he
[pg 177] can form no excuse to his father or Chremes for not concluding it. Hence his rage against Davus, and new stratagems on the part of the slave to prevent the nuptials. He contrives that Chremes should overhear a conversation between him and Mysis, Glycerium’s attendant, concerning the child which her mistress bore to Pamphilus, and Chremes in consequence instantly breaks off from his engagement. In this situation, Crito arrives to claim heirship to Chrysis, the reputed sister of Glycerium. He discloses, that Glycerium having been shipwrecked in infancy, had been preserved by his kinsman, the father of Chrysis; and, from his detail, it is discovered, that she is the daughter of Chremes. There is thus no farther obstacle to her marriage with Pamphilus; and the other daughter of Chremes is of course united to Charinus.

The long narrative with which the *Andria*, like several other plays of Terence, commences, and which is a component part of the drama itself, is beautiful in point of style, and does not fail to excite our interest concerning the characters. We perceive the compassion and even admiration of Simo for Glycerium, and we feel that, if convinced of her respectable birth and character, he would have preferred her to all others, even to the daughter of Chremes. Glycerium, indeed, does not appear on the stage; but her actual appearance could scarcely have added to the interest which her hapless situation inspires. Simo is the model of an excellent father. He is not so easily duped by his slaves as most of the old men in Plautus; and his temper does not degenerate, like that of many other characters in the plays of Terence, either into excessive harshness, or criminal indulgence. His observations are strikingly just, and are the natural language of age and experience. Chremes, the other old man, does not divide our interest with Simo; yet we see just enough of his good disposition, to make us sympathize with his happiness in the discovery of a daughter. Pamphilus is rendered interesting by his tenderness for Glycerium, and respect for his father. Davus supports the character of a shrewd, cunning, penetrating slave; he is wholly devoted to the interests of Pamphilus, but is often comically deterred from executing his stratagems by dread of the lash of his old master. The part of Crito, too, is happily imagined: His apprehension lest he be suspected of seeking an inheritance to which he has no just title, and his awkward feelings on coming to claim the wealth of a kinswoman of suspicious character, are artfully unfolded. Even the gossip and absurd flattery of the midwife, Lesbia, is excellent. The poet has also shewn considerable address in portraying the character of Chrysis, who was
[pg 178] supposed to be the sister of Glycerium, but had died previous to the commencement of the action. In the first scene, he represents her as having for a long while virtuously struggled with adverse fortune, and having finally been precipitated into vice rather by pressure of poverty than depravity of will; and afterwards, in the pathetic account which Pamphilus gives of his last conference with her, we insensibly receive a pleasing impression of her character, and forget her errors for the sake of her amiable qualities. All this was necessary, in order to prevent our forming a disadvantageous idea of Glycerium, who had resided with Chrysis, but was afterwards to become the wife of Pamphilus, and to be acknowledged as the daughter of Chremes.

This play has been imitated in the *Andrienne* of Baron, the celebrated French actor. The Latin names are preserved in the *dramatis personæ*, and the first, second, and fifth acts, have been nearly translated from Terence. In the fourth, however, instead of the marriage being interrupted by Davus's stratagem, Glycerium, hearing a report of the falsehood of her lover, rushes on the stage, throws herself at the feet of Chremes, and prevails on him to break off the intended match between his daughter and Pamphilus. But, though the incidents are nearly the same, the dialogue is ill written, and is very remote from the graceful ease and simplicity of Terence.

Steele's *Conscious Lovers* is the best imitation of the *Andria*. The English play, it will be remembered, commences in a similar manner with the Latin comedy, by Sir John Bevil relating to an old servant, that he had discovered the love of his son for Indiana, an unknown and stranger girl, by his behaviour at a masquerade. The report of this attachment nearly breaks off an intended marriage between young Bevil and Lucinda, Sealand's daughter. Young Bevil relieves the mind of Myrtle, the lover of Lucinda, by assuring him that he is utterly averse to the match. Still, however, he pretends to his father, that he is ready to comply with his wishes; and, meanwhile, writes to Lucinda, requesting that she would refuse the offer of his hand. Myrtle, hearing of this correspondence having taken place, without knowing its import, is so fired with jealousy that he sends Bevil a challenge. Sealand, being still pressed by Sir John to bestow his daughter in marriage, waits on Indiana, in order to discover the precise nature of her relations with Bevil. She details to him her story; and, on his alluding to the probability of the projected nuptials being soon concluded, she tears off, in a transport of passion, a bracelet, by which
[pg 179] Sealand discovers, that she is a daughter whom he had lost, and who, while proceeding to join him in the East Indies, had been carried into a French harbour, where she first met with young Bevil.

An English translator of Terence remarks, "That Steele has unfolded his plot with more art than his predecessor, but is greatly his inferior in delineation of character. Simo is the most finished character in the Latin piece, but Sir John Bevil, who corresponds to him, is quite insignificant. Young Bevil is the most laboured character in the *Conscious Lovers*, but he is inferior to Pamphilus. His deceit is better managed by Terence than Steele. Bevil's supposed consent to marry is followed by no consequence; and his honest dissimulation, as he calls it, is less reconcilable to the philosophic turn of his character, than to the natural sensibility of Pamphilus. Besides, the conduct of the latter is palliated, by being driven to it by the artful instigations of Davus, who executes the lower part of the stratagems, whereas Bevil is left entirely to his own resources." Bevil, indeed, in spite of his refinement and formality, his admiration of the moral writers, and, "the charming vision of Mirza consulted in a morning," is a good deal of a *Plato-Scapin*. Indiana, who corresponds to Glycerium, is introduced with more effect than the ladies in the French plays imitated from Terence. Her tearing off her ornaments, however, in a fit of despair, at the conclusion, is too violent. It is inconsistent with the rest of her character; and we feel that she would not have done so, had not the author found that the bracelet was necessary for her recognition as the daughter of Sealand. The under plot is perhaps better managed in the English than in the Latin play. Myrtle sustains a part more essential to the principal fable than Charinus; and his character is better discriminated from that of Bevil than those of the two lovers in the *Andria*. The part of Cimberton, the other lover of Lucinda, favoured by Mrs Sealand, is of Steele's own contrivance; and of course, also, the stratagem devised by Bevil, in which Myrtle and Tom pretend to be lawyers, and Myrtle afterwards personates Sir Geoffry Cimberton, the uncle of his rival.

The *Andria* has also suggested those scenes of Moore's *Foundling*, which relate to the love of young Belmont, and the recognition of Fidelia as the daughter of Sir Charles Raymond.

Eunuchus.—Though, in modern times, the *Andria* has been the most admired play of Terence, in Rome the *Eunuchus* was by much the most popular of all his performances, and he received for it 8000 sesterces, the greatest reward which poet had ever yet obtained[302]. In the *Andria*, indeed,
[pg 180] there is much grace and delicacy, and some tenderness; but the *Eunuchus* is so full of vivacity and fire, as almost to redeem its author from the well-known censure of Cæsar, that there was no *vis comica* in his dramas.

The chief part of the *Eunuchus* is taken from a play of the same title by Menander; but the characters of the parasite and captain have been transferred into it from another play of Menander, called *Kolax*. There was an old play, too, by Nævius, founded on the *Kolax*; but Terence, in his prologue, denies having been indebted to this performance.

The scenes of the *Eunuchus* are so arranged, that the main plot is introduced by that which is secondary, and which at first has the appearance of being the principal one. Phædria is brought on the stage venting his indignation at being excluded from the house of the courtezan Thais, for the sake of Thraso, who is the sole braggart captain exhibited in the plays of our author. Thais, however, succeeds in persuading Phædria that she would admit Thraso only for two days, in order to obtain from him the gift of a damsel who had originally belonged to the mother of Thais, but after her death had been sold to the captain. Phædria, vying in gifts with Thraso, presents his mistress with an Ethiopian eunuch. The younger brother of Phædria, who is called Chærea, having accidentally seen the maid presented to Thais by Thraso, falls in love with her, and, by a stratagem of his father's slave Parmeno, he is introduced as the eunuch to the house of Thais, where he does not in all respects consistently support the character he had assumed. After Chærea had gone off, his adventure was discovered; and Pythias, the waiting maid of Thais, in

revenge for Parmeno's fraud, tells him that Chærea, having been detected, was about to be made precisely what he had pretended to be. Parmeno, believing this report, informs the father of Chærea, who instantly rushes into the house of Thais, (to which, by this time, his son had ventured to return,) and being there relieved from his sudden apprehension, he consents the more readily to the marriage of Chærea with the girl whom he had deluded, and who is now discovered to be an Athenian citizen, and the sister of Chremes. In this paroxysm of good humour, he also agrees that Phædria should retain Thais as his mistress. Thraso and his parasite, Gnatho, having been foiled in an attack on the house of Thais, enter into terms, and, at the persuasion of Gnatho, Thraso is admitted into the society of Phædria, and is allowed to share with him the favours of Thais.

[pg 181] There are thus, strictly speaking, three plots in the *Eunuchus*, but they are blended with inimitable art. The quarrel and reconciliation of Thais and Phædria promote the marriage of Chærea with Pamphila, the girl presented by Thraso to Thais. This gift again produces the dispute between Phædria and Thais, and gives room for the imposture of Chærea. It is unfortunate that the regard in which the ancient dramatists held the unity of place, interposed between the spectators and the representation of what would have been highly comical—the father discovering his son in the eunuch's habit in the house of Thais, the account of which has been thrown into narrative. At the conclusion Thraso is permitted, with consent of Phædria, to share the good graces of Thais; but, as has been remarked by La Harpe[303] and Colman[304], and as indeed must be felt by every one who reads the play, this termination is scarcely consistent with the manners of gentlemen, and it implies the utmost meanness in Phædria to admit him into his society, or to allow him a share in the favours of his mistress, merely that he may defray part of the expense of her establishment.

The drama, however, is full of vivacity and intrigue. Through the whole piece the author amuses us with his pleasantries, and in no scene discovers that his fund of entertainment is exhausted. Most of the characters, too, are happily sketched. Under Thais, Menander is supposed to have given a representation of his own mistress Glycerium. On the general nature of the parts of the parasite and braggart captain, something has been said while treating of the dramas of Plautus; but Terence has greatly refined and improved on these favourite characters of his predecessor. Gnatho is master of a much more delicate and artful mode of adulation than former flatterers, and supports his consequence with his patron, at the same time that he laughs at him and lives on him. He boasts, in the second scene of the second act, that he is the founder of a new class of parasites, who ingratiated themselves with men of fortune and shallow understandings, solely by humouring their fancies and admiring what they said, instead of earning a livelihood by submitting to blows, the ridicule of the company, and all manner of indignities, like the antiquated race of parasites whom Plautus describes as beaten, kicked, and abused at pleasure:—

> "Et hîc quidem, hercle, nisi qui colaphos perpeti
> Potis parasitus, frangique aulas in caput,
> Vel ire extra portam trigeminam ad saccum libet."

[pg 182] The new parasite, of whom Gnatho may be considered as the representative, had been delineated in the characters of Theophrastus, and has more resemblance to Shakspeare's Osrick, or to the class of parasites described by Juvenal as infesting the families of the Great in the latter ages of Rome[305]. Thraso, the braggart captain, in the *Eunuchus*, is ridiculous enough to supply the audience with mirth, without indulging in the extravagant bluster of Pyrgopolinices. A scene in the fourth act gives the most lively representation of the conceit and ridiculous vanity of this soldier, who, calling together a few slaves, pretends to marshal and draw them up as if they formed a numerous army, and assumes all the airs of a general. This part is so contrived, that nothing could have more happily tended to make him appear ridiculous though he says nothing extravagant, or beyond what might naturally be expected from the mouth of a coxcomb. One new feature in Thraso's character is his fondness for repeating his jests, and passion for being admired as a wit no less than a warrior. There is, perhaps, nowhere to be found a truer picture of the fond and froward passion of love, than that which is given us in the character of Phædria. Horace and Persius, when they purposely set themselves to expose and exaggerate its follies, could imagine nothing beyond it. The former, indeed, in the third satire of his second book, where he has given a picture of the irresolution of lovers, has copied part of the dialogue introduced near the commencement of the *Eunuchus*.

The love, however, both of Phædria and Chærea is more that of temperament than sentiment: Of consequence, the *Eunuchus* is inferior to the *Andria* in delicacy and tenderness; but there are not wanting passages which excel in these higher qualities. Addison has remarked[306], that Phædria's request to his mistress, on leaving her for a few days, is inimitably beautiful and natural—

> "Egone quid velim?
> Cum Milite isto præsens, absens ut sies;
> Dies noctesque me ames: me desideres:
> Me somnies: me expectes: de me cogites:
> Me speres: me te oblectes: mecum tota sis:
> Meus fac sis postremo animus, quando ego sum tuus."

This demand was rather exorbitant, and Thais had some reason to reply—*Me miseram!*

There is an Italian imitation of the *Eunuchus* in *La Talanta*, a comedy by Aretine, in which the
[pg 183] courtezan who gives the name to the play corresponds with Thais, and her lover Orfinio to Phædria,—the characteristic dispositions of both the originals being closely followed in the copy. A youth, from his disguise supposed to be a girl, is presented to La Talanta by Tinca, the Thraso of the piece, who, being exasperated at the treatment he had received from the courtezan, meditates, like Thraso, a military attack on her dwelling-house; and, though easily repulsed, he is permitted at the conclusion, in respect of his wealth and bounty, to continue to share with Orfinio the favours of La Talanta.

There is more *lubricity* in the *Eunuchus* of Terence, than in any of his other performances; and hence, perhaps, it has been selected by Fontaine as the most suitable drama for his imitation. His *Eunuque*, as he very justly remarks in his advertisement prefixed, “n’est qu’une mediocre copie d’un excellent original.” Fontaine, instead of adapting the incidents to Parisian manners, like Moliere and Regnard, in their delightful imitations of Plautus, has retained the ancient names, and scene of action. The earlier part is a mere translation from the Latin, except that the character of Thais is softened down from a courtezan to a coquette. The next deviation from the original is the omission of the recital by Chærea, of the success of his audacious enterprize—instead of which, Fontaine has introduced his Chærea professing honourable and respectful love to Pamphile. In the unravelling of the dramatic plot, the French author has departed widely from Terence. There is nothing of the alarm concerning Chærea given by Thais’ maid to Parmeno, and by him communicated to the father: The old man merely solicits Parmeno to prevail on his sons to marry:—

> “Il se veut desormais tenir clos et couvert,
> Caresser, les pieds chauds, quelque Bru qui lui plaise,
> Conter son jeune temps, et banqueter a son aise.”

This wish is doubly accomplished, by the discovery that Pamphile is of reputable birth, and by Phædria’s reconciliation with Thais. While making such changes on the conclusion, and accommodating it in some measure to the feelings of the age, I am surprised that the French author retained that part of the compact with Thraso, by which he is to remain in the society of Phædria merely to be fleeced and ridiculed.

The *Eunuchus* is also the origin of *Le Muet* by Bruyes and Palaprat, who laboured in conjunction, like our Beaumont and Fletcher, and who have made such alterations on the Latin drama as they thought advisable in their age and country. In this play, which was first acted in 1691, a young
[pg 184] man, who feigns to be dumb, is introduced as a page in a house where his mistress resided. But although an Ethiopian eunuch, which was an article of state among the ancients, may have attracted the fancy of Thais, it is not probable that the French countess should have been so desirous to receive a present of a dumb page. Those scenes in which the credulous father is made to believe that his son had lost the power of speech, from the effects of love and sorcery, and is persuaded, by a valet disguised as a doctor, that the only remedy for his dumbness is an immediate union with the object of his passion, are improbable and overcharged. The character of the parasite is omitted, and instead of Thraso we have a rough blunt sea captain, who had protected Zayde when lost by her parents.

The only English imitation of the *Eunuchus* is *Bellamira, or the Mistress*, an unsuccessful comedy by Sir Charles Sedley, first printed in 1687. In this play the scene lies in London, but there is otherwise hardly any variation in the incidents; and there is no novelty introduced, except Bellamira and Merryman’s plot of robbing Dangerfield, the braggart captain of the piece, an incident evidently borrowed from Shakspeare’s Henry IV.

Heautontimorumenos. The chief plot of this play, which I think on the whole the least happy effort of Terence’s imitation, and which, of all his plays, is the most foreign from our manners, is taken, like the last-mentioned drama, from Menander. It derives its Greek appellation from the voluntary punishment inflicted on himself by a father, who, having driven his son into banishment by excess of severity, avenges him, by retiring to the country, where he partakes only of the hardest fare, and labours the ground with his own hands. The deep parental distress, however, of Menedemus, with which the play opens, forms but an inconsiderable part of it, as the son, Clinia, returns in the second act, and other incidents of a comic cast are then interwoven with the drama. The plan of Clitopho’s mistress being brought to the house both of Menedemus and his neighbour Chremes, in the character of Clinia’s mistress, has given rise to some amusing situations: but the devices adopted by the slave Syrus, to deceive and cheat the two old men, are too intricate, and much less ingenious than those of a similar description in most other Latin plays. One of his artifices, however, in order to melt the heart of Chremes, by persuading him that Clitopho thinks he is not his son, has been much applauded; particularly the preparation for this stratagem, where, wisely concluding that one would best contribute to the imposition who
[pg 185] was himself deceived, he, in the first place, makes Clitopho believe that he is not the son of his reputed father.

Terence himself, in his prologue, has called this play *double*, probably in allusion to the two plots which it contains. Julius Scaliger absurdly supposes that it was so termed because one half of the play was represented in the evening, and the other half on the following morning[307]. It has been more plausibly conjectured, that the original plot of the Greek play was simple, consisting merely of the character of the Self-tormentor Menedemus, the love of his son Clinia for Antiphila, and the discovery of the real condition of his mistress; but that Terence had added to this single fable,

either from his own invention, or from some other Greek play, the passion of Clitopho for Bacchis, and the devices of the slave in order to extract money from old Chremes[308]. These two fables are connected by the poet with much art, and form a double intrigue, instead of the simple argument of the Greek original.

Diderot has objected strongly to the principal subject which gives name to this play, and to the character of the self-tormenting father. Tragedy, he says, represents individual characters, like those of Regulus, Orestes, and Cato; but the chief characters in comedy should represent a class or species, and if they only resemble individuals, the comic drama would revert to what it was in its infancy.—"Mais on peut dire," continues he, "que ce pere là n'est pas dans la nature. Une grande ville fourniroit a peine dans un siecle l'example d'une affliction aussi bizarre." It is observed in the *Spectator*[309], on the other hand, that though there is not in the whole drama one passage that could raise a laugh, it is from beginning to end the most perfect picture of human life that ever was exhibited.

There has been a great contest, particularly among the French critics, whether the unities of time and place be preserved in *Heautontimorumenos*. In the year 1640, Menage had a conversational dispute, on this subject, with the Abbé D'Aubignac, with whom he at that period lived on terms of the most intimate friendship. The latter, who contended for the strictest interpretation of the unities, first put his arguments in writing, but without his name, in his "Discours sur la troisieme comedie de Terence; contre ceux qui pensent qu'elle n'est pas dans les regles anciennes du poeme dramatique." Menage answered him in his "Reponse au discours," &c.; and, in 1650, he
[pg 186] published both in his *Miscellanea*, without leave of the author of the *Discours*. This, and some disrespectful expressions employed in the *Reponse*, gave mortal offence to the Abbé, who, in 1655, wrote a reply to the answer, entitled "Terence Justifié, &c. contre les Erreurs de Maistre Gilles Menage, Avocat en Parlement." This designation of *Maistre*, proved intolerable to the feelings of Menage. Hearing that the tract was full of injurious expressions, he declared publicly and solemnly, that he never would read it; but being afterwards urged to peruse it by some good-natured friends, he consulted the casuists of the Sorbonne, and the College of Jesuits, on the point of conscience; and having at last read it with their approval, he wrote a full reply, which was not published till after the death of his opponent.

In these various tracts, it was maintained by the Abbé, that unity of time was most strictly preserved in the *Heautontimorumenos*, as a less period than twelve hours was supposed to pass during the representation, the longest space to which, by the rules of the drama, it could be legitimately prolonged. Of course he adduces arguments and citations, tending to restrict, as far as possible, the period of the dramatic action. In the third scene of the second act, it is said *vesperascit*, and in the first scene of the third act, *Luciscit hoc jam*. Now the Abbé, giving to the term *vesperascit* the signification, "It is already night," was of opinion, that the action commenced as late as seven or eight in the evening, when Menedemus returned to Athens from his farm; that the scene of the drama is supposed to pass during the Pithœgia, or festivals of Bacchus, held in April, at which season not more than nine hours intervened between twilight and dawn; that the festival continued the whole night, and that none of the characters went to bed, so that the continuity of action was no more broken than the unity of time. Menage, on the other hand, contended that at least fifteen hours must be granted to the dramatic action, but that this extension implied no violation of the dramatic unities, which, according to the precepts of Aristotle, would not have been broken, even if twenty-four hours had been allotted. He successfully shews, however, that fifteen hours, at least, must be allowed. According to him, the play opens early in the evening, while Menedemus is yet labouring in his field. The festivals were in February; and he proves, from a minute examination, that the incidents which follow after it is declared that *luciscit*, must have occupied fully three hours. Some of the characters, he thinks, retired to rest, but no void was thereby left in the action, as the two lovers, Bacchis, and the
[pg 187] slaves, sat up arranging their amorous stratagems. Madame Dacier adopted the opinion of Aubignac, which she fortified by reference to a wood engraving in a very ancient MS. in the Royal Library, which represents Menedemus as having quitted his work in the fields, and as bearing away his implements of husbandry.

The poet being perhaps aware that the action of this comedy was exceptionable, and that the dramatic unities were not preserved in the most rigid sense of the term, has apparently exerted himself to compensate for these deficiencies by the introduction of many beautiful moral maxims: and by that purity of style, which distinguishes all his productions, but which shines, perhaps, most brightly in the *Heautontimorumenos*.

That part of the plot of this comedy, where Clitopho's mistress is introduced as Clinia's mistress, into the house of both the old men, has given rise to Chapman's comedy, *All Fooles*, which was first printed in 1605, 4to., and was a favourite production in its day. In this play, by the contrivance of Rynaldo, the younger son of Marc Antonio, a lady called Gratiana, privately married to his elder brother Fortunio, is introduced, and allowed to remain for some time at the house of their father, by persuading him that she is the wife of Valerio, the son of one of his neighbours, who had married her against his parent's inclination, and that it would be an act of kindness to give her shelter, till a reconciliation could be effected. By this means Fortunio enjoys the society of his bride, and Valerio, her pretended husband, has, at the same time, an admirable opportunity of continuing his courtship of Bellonora, the daughter of Marc Antonio.

Adelphi.—The principal subject of this drama is usually supposed to have been taken from

Menander's *Adelphoi*; but it appears that Alexis, the uncle of Menander, also wrote a comedy, entitled *Adelphoi*; so that perhaps the elegant Latin copy may have been as much indebted to the uncle's as to the nephew's performance, for the delicacy of its characters and the charms of its dialogue. We are informed, however, in the prologue, that the part of the drama in which the music girl is carried off from the pander, has been taken from the *Synapothnescontes* of Diphilus. That comedy, though the version is now lost, had been translated by Plautus, under the title of *Commorientes*. He had left out the incidents, however, concerning the music girl, and Terence availed himself of this omission to interweave them with the principal plot of his delightful drama —"Minus existimans laudis proprias scribere quam Græcas transferre."

[pg 188] The title, which is supposed to be imperfect, is derived from two brothers, on whose contrasted characters the chief subject and amusement of the piece depend. Demea, the elder, who lived in the country, had past his days in thrift and labour, and was remarkable for his severe penurious disposition. Micio, the younger brother, was, on the contrary, distinguished by his indulgent and generous temper. Being a bachelor, he had adopted Æschinus, his brother's eldest son, whom he brought up without laying much restraint on his conduct. Ctesipho, the other son of Demea, was educated with great strictness by his father, who boasted of the regular and moral behaviour of this child, which, as he thought, was so strongly contrasted with the excesses of him who had been reared under the charge of his brother. Æschinus at length carries off a music girl from the slave-merchant, in whose possession she was. Hence fresh indignation on the part of Demea, and new self-congratulation on the system of education he had pursued with Ctesipho: Hence, too, the deepest distress on the part of an unfortunate girl, to whom Æschinus had promised marriage; and also of her relations, at this proof of his alienated affections. At last, however, it is discovered that Æschinus had run off with the music girl, for the sake, and at the instigation, of his brother Ctesipho. The play accordingly concludes with the union of Æschinus and the girl to whom he was betrothed, and the total change of disposition on the part of Demea, who now becomes so complete a convert to the system of Micio, that he allows his son to retain the music girl as his mistress.

The plot of the *Adelphi* may thus be perhaps considered as double; but the interest which Æschinus takes in Ctesipho's amour, combines their loves so naturally, that they can hardly be considered as distinct or separate; and the details by which the plot is carried on, are managed with such infinite skill, that the intrigue of at least four acts of the *Adelphi* is more artfully conducted than that of any other piece of Terence. At the commencement of the play, Micio summons his servant Storax, whom he had sent to find out Æschinus; but as the servant does not appear, Micio concludes that the youth had not yet returned from the place where he had supped on the preceding evening, and is in consequence overwhelmed with all the tender anxiety of a father concerning an absent son. This alarm gives us some insight into the character of the young man, and explains the interest Micio takes in his welfare, without shewing too plainly the art and design of the author. His uneasiness, by naturally leading him to reflect on the situation of the
[pg 189] family, and the doubtful part he had himself acted, brings in less awkwardly than usual one of those long soliloquies, in which the domestic affairs of the speaker are explained by him for the sake of the audience. Demea is then introduced, having just learned, on his arrival in the city, that Æschinus had carried off the music girl. His character and predominant feelings are finely marked in the account which he gives of this outrage, dwelling on every minute particular, and exaggerating the offences of Æschinus. This passage, too, acquires additional zest and relish, on a second perusal of the play, when it is known that the son so much commended is chiefly in fault. The grief of the mother of the girl, who was betrothed to Æschinus, and the honest indignation of her faithful old servant Geta, are highly interesting. The interview of Micio with his adopted son, after he had discovered the circumstances of this connection, is eminently beautiful. His delicate reproof for the young man's want of confidence, in not communicating to him the state of his heart—the touches of good humour, mildness, and affection, which may be traced in every line of Micio's part of the dialogue, as well as the natural bursts of passion, and ingenuous shame, in Æschinus, are perhaps more characteristic of the tender and elegant genius of Terence, than any other scene in his dramas. But the triumph of comic art, is the gradation of Demea's anger and distresses—his perfect conviction of the sobriety of his son, who, he is persuaded by Syrus, had shewn the utmost indignation at the conduct of Æschinus, and had gone to the country in disgust, when in fact he was at that moment seated at a feast—then his perplexity on not finding him at the farm, and his learning that Æschinus, having violated a free citizen, was about to be married to her, though she had no portion. Even his meeting Syrus intoxicated augments his rage, at the general libertinism and extravagance of the family. At length the climax of events is finally completed, by discovering that the music girl had been carried off for the sake of his favourite son, and by finding him at a carousal with his brother's dissolute family.

With this incident the fable naturally concludes, and it is perhaps to be regretted that Terence had not also ended the drama with the third scene of the fifth act, where Demea breaks in upon the entertainment. The conversion of Demea, indeed, with which the remaining scenes are occupied, grows out of the preceding events. He had met, during the course of the play, with many mortifications—his anger, complaints, and advice, had been all neglected and slighted—he had seen his brother loved and followed, and found himself shunned; but such a change in long-
[pg 190] confirmed habits could hardly have been effected in so short a period, or by a single lesson, however striking and important. His complaisance, too, is awkward, and his generosity is evidently about to run into profusion.

But if all this be an impropriety, what shall we say of the gross absurdity of Micio, a bachelor of sixty-five, marrying an old woman, the mother of Æschinus' bride, (and whom he had never seen but once,) merely out of complaisance to his friends, who seemed to have no motive in making the request, except that she was quite solitary, had nobody to care for her, and was long past child-bearing—

—— "Parere jam diu hæc per annos non potest:
Nec, qui eam respiciat, quisquam est; sola est."

Micio had all along been represented as possessed of so much judgment, good sense, and knowledge of the world, that this last piece of extravagance destroys the interest we had previously felt in the character. Donatus, who has given us some curious information in his excellent commentary on Terence, with regard to the manner in which he had altered his comedies from the original Greek, says, that in the play of Menander, the old Bachelor has no reluctance at entering into a state of matrimony.—"Apud Menandrum, Senex de nuptiis non gravatur." The English translator of Terence thinks, that the Latin poet, by making Micio at first express a repugnance to the proposed match, has improved on his model; but it appears to me, that this only makes his unbounded complaisance more improbable and ridiculous. Indeed the incongruity and inconsistence of the concluding scenes of the *Adelphi*, have been considered so great, that a late German translator of Terence has supposed that they did not form a component part of the regular comedy, but were in fact the *Exodium*, a sort of afterpiece, in which the characters of the preceding play were usually represented in grotesque situations, and with overcharged colours[310].

So much for the plot of the *Adelphi*, and the incidents by which the conclusion is brought about. With regard to the characters of the piece, Æschinus is an excellent delineation of the elegant ease and indifference of a fine gentleman. In one scene, however, he is represented as a lover, full of tenderness, and keenly alive to all the anxieties, fears, and emotions of the passion by which he is affected. In the parts of Demea and Micio, the author has violated the precept of Horace with regard to a dramatic character:

[pg 191] —— "Servetur ad imum
Qualis ab incepto processerit, et sibi constet."

During four acts, however, the churlishness of Demea is well contrasted with the mildness of Micio, whose fondness and partiality for his adopted son are extremely pleasing. "One great theatrical resource," says Gibbon, "is the opposition and contrast of characters which thus display each other. The severity of Demea, and easiness of Micio, throw mutual light; and we could not be so well acquainted with the misanthropy of Alceste, were it not for the fashionable complaisant character of Philinte[311]." Accordingly, in the modern drama, we often find, that if one of the lovers be a gay companion, the other is grave and serious; like Frankly and Bellamy, in the *Suspicious Husband*, or Absolute and Faulkland in the *Rivals*. Yet in the *Adelphi*, the contrast, perhaps, is too direct, and too constantly obtruded on the attention of the audience. It has the appearance of what is called antithesis in writing, and, in the conduct of the drama, has the same effect as that figure in composition. Diderot, in his *Essay on Dramatic Poetry*, also objects to these two contrasted characters, that, being drawn with equal force, the moral intention of the drama is rendered equivocal; and that we have something of the same feeling which every one has experienced while reading the *Misanthrope* of Moliere, in which we can never tell whether Alceste or Philinte is most in the right, or, more properly speaking, farthest in the wrong.—"On diroit," continues he, "au commencement du cinquieme acte des *Adelphes*, que l'auteur, embarassé du contraste qu'il avoit etabli, a été contraint d'abandonner son but et de renverser l'interet de sa piece. Mais qu'est il arrivé: c'est qu'on ne scait plus a qui s'interesser; et qu'apres avoit eté pour Micion contre Demea, on finit sans savoir pour qui l'on est. On desireroit presque un troisieme pere qui tint le milieu entre ces deux personnages, et qui en fit connoitre le vice."

It is not unlikely, however, that this sort of uncertainty was just the intention of Terence, or rather of Menander. It was probably their design to show the disadvantages resulting from each mode of education pursued, and hence, by an easy inference, to point out the golden mean which ought to be preserved by fathers; for, if Demea be unreasonably severe, the indulgence of Micio is excessive, and his connivance at the disorders of Ctesipho, which he even assisted him to support, is as reprehensible, as the extraordinary sentiment which he utters at the commencement of the comedy:—

[pg 192] "Non est flagitium, mihi crede, adolescentulum
Scortari, neque potare; non est: neque fores effringere."

This, though the breaking doors was an ordinary piece of gallantry, is, it must be confessed, rather loose morality. But some of the sentiments in the drama are equally remarkable for their propriety, and the knowledge they discover of the feelings and circumstances of mankind; as,

"Omnes, quibus res sunt minus secundæ, magis sunt, nescio quomodo,
Suspiciosi: ad contumeliam omnia accipiunt magis;
Propter suam impotentiam se semper credunt negligi."

And afterwards,—

"Ita vita 'st hominum, quasi, quum ludas tesseris;
Si illud, quod maxime opus est jactu, non cadit,
Illud, quod cecidit forte, id arte ut corrigas.
* * * * *
Nunquam ita quisquam bene subducta ratione ad vitam fuit,
Quin res, ætas, usus, semper aliquid adportet novi,
Aliquid moneat, ut illa, quæ te scire credas, nescias;
Et quæ tibi putâris prima, in experiundo repudies."

A play possessing so many excellencies as the *Adelphi*, could scarcely fail to be frequently imitated by modern dramatists. It has generally been said, that Moliere borrowed from the *Adelphi* his comedy *L'Ecole des Maris*, where the brothers Sganarelle and Ariste, persons of very opposite dispositions, bring up two young ladies intrusted to their care on different systems; the one allowing a proper liberty—the other, who wished to marry his ward, employing a constant restraint, which, however, did not prevent her from contriving to elope with a favoured lover. The chief resemblance consists in the characters of the two guardians—in some of the discussions, which they hold together on their opposite systems of management—and some observations in soliloquy on each other's folly. Thus, for example, Demea, the severe brother in Terence, exclaims:

—— "O Jupiter,
Hanccine vitam! hoscine mores! hanc dementiam!
Uxor sine dote veniet: intus Psaltria est:
Domus sumptuosa: adolescens luxu perditus:
Senex delirans. Ipsa, si cupiat, Salus,
Servare prorsus non potest hanc familiam[312]."

In like manner, Sganarelle, the corresponding character in Moliere:—

[pg 193]

"Quelle belle famille! un vieillard insensé!
Une fille maitresse et coquette suprême!
Des valets impudents! Non, la Sagesse même
N'en viendroit pas à bout, perdroit sens et raison,
A vouloir corriger une telle maison[313]."

Indeed, were it not for the minute resemblance of particular passages, I would think it as likely, that Moliere had been indebted for the leading idea of his comedy to the second tale of the eighth night of Straparola, an Italian novelist of the sixteenth century, from whom he unquestionably borrowed the plot of his admirable comedy, *L'Ecole des Femmes*. The principal amusement, however, in the *Ecole des Maris*, which consists of Isabelle complaining to her guardian, Sganarelle, of her lover, Valere, has been suggested by the third novel, in the third day of Boccaccio's *Decameron*.

A much closer imitation of the *Adelphi* than the *Ecole des Maris* of Moliere may be found in the *Ecole des Peres*, by Baron, author of the *Andrienne*. The genius of this celebrated actor seems to have been constrained by copying from Terence, which has deprived his drama of all air of originality, while, at the same time, his alterations are such as to render it but an imperfect image of the *Adelphi*. It were, therefore, to be wished, that he had adhered more closely to the Roman poet, or, like Moliere, deviated from him still farther. His exhibition of Clarice and Pamphile, the mistresses of the two young men, on the stage, has no better effect than the introduction of Glycerium in his *Andrienne*. The characters of Telamon and Alcée are so altered, as to preserve neither the strength nor delicacy of those of Micio and Demea; while the change of disposition, which the severe father undergoes in the fifth act, has been neither rejected nor retained: He accedes to the proposals for his children's happiness, but his complaisance is evidently forced and sarcastic; and he ultimately, in a fit of bad humour, breaks off all connection with his family:

"J'abandonne les Brus, les Enfans, et le Frere;
Je ne saurois deja les souffrir sans horreur,
Et je les donne tous au diable de bon cœur."

Diderot had evidently his eye on the characters of Micio and Demea in drawing those of M. d'Orbesson and Le Commandeur, in his *Comedie Larmoyante*, entitled *Le Pere de Famille*. The scenes between the Pere de Famille and his son, St Albin, who had long secretly visited Sophie,
[pg 194] an unknown girl in indigent circumstances, seem formed on the beautiful dialogue, already mentioned, which passes between Micio and his adopted child.

The *Adelphi* is also the origin of Shadwell's comedy, the *Squire of Alsatia*. Spence, in his *Anecdotes*[314], says, on the authority of Dennis the critic, that the story on which the *Squire of Alsatia* was built, was a true fact. That the whole plot is founded on fact, I think very improbable, as it coincides most closely with that of the *Adelphi*. Sir William and Sir Edward Belfond are the two brothers, while Belfond senior and junior correspond to Æschinus and Ctesipho. The chief alteration, and that to which Dennis probably alluded, is the importance of the part assigned to Belfond senior; who, having come to London, is beset and cozened by all sorts of bankrupts and cheats, inhabitants of Alsatia, (Whitefriars,) and by their stratagems is nearly inveigled into a marriage with Mrs Termagant, a woman of infamous character, and furious temper. The part of

Belfond junior is much less agreeable than that of Æschinus. His treatment of Lucia evinces, in the conclusion, a hard-hearted infidelity, which we are little disposed to pardon, especially as we feel no interest in his new mistress, Isabella. On the whole, though the plots be nearly the same, the tone of feeling and sentiment are very different, and the English comedy is as remote from the Latin original, as the grossest vulgarity can be from the most simple and courtly elegance. The *Squire of Alsatia*, however, took exceedingly at first as an occasional play. It discovered the cant terms, that were before not generally known, except to cheats themselves; and was a good deal instrumental towards causing the great nest of villains in the metropolis to be regulated by public authority[315].

In Cumberland's *Choleric Man*, the chief characters, though he seems to deny it in his dedicatory epistle to Detraction, have also been traced after those of the *Adelphi*. The love intrigues, indeed, are different; but the parts of the half-brothers, Manlove and Nightshade, (the choleric-man,) are evidently formed on those of Micio and Demea; while the contrasted education, yet similar conduct, of the two sons of Nightshade, one of whom had been adopted by Manlove, and the father's rage on detecting his favourite son in an amorous intrigue, have been obviously suggested by the behaviour of Æschinus and Ctesipho.

[pg 195] The philanthropic speeches of Micio have been a constant resource both to the French dramatists and our own, and it would be endless to specify the various imitations of his sentiments. Those of Kno'well, in Ben Jonson's *Every Man in his Humour*, have a particular resemblance to them. His speech, beginning—

> "There is a way of winning more by love[316],"

is evidently formed on the celebrated passage in Terence,—

> "Pudore et liberalitate liberos," &c.

Hecyra—Several of Terence's plays can hardly be accounted comedies, if by that term be understood, dramas which excite laughter. They are in what the French call the *genre serieux*, and are perhaps the origin of the *comedie larmoyante*. The events of human life, for the most part, are neither deeply distressing nor ridiculous; and, in a dramatic representation of such incidents, the action must advance by embarrassments and perplexities, which, though below tragic pathos, are not calculated to excite merriment. Diderot, who seems to have been a great student of the works of Terence, thinks the *Hecyra*, or Mother-in-law, should be classed among the serious dramas. It exhibits no buffoonery, or tricks of slaves, or ridiculous parasite, or extravagant braggart captain; but contains a beautiful and delightful picture of private life, and those distresses which ruffle "the smooth current of domestic joy." It was taken from a play of Apollodorus; but, as Donatus informs us, was abridged from the Greek comedy,—many things having been represented in the original, which, in the imitation, are only related. In the *Hecyra*, a young man, called Pamphilus, had long refused to marry, on account of his attachment to the courtezan Bacchis. He is at length, however, constrained by his father to choose a wife, whose gentleness and modest behaviour soon wean his affections from his mistress. Pamphilus being obliged to leave home for some time, his wife, on pretence of a quarrel with her mother-in-law, quits his father's house; and Pamphilus, on his return home, finds, that she had given birth to a child, of which he supposed that he could not have been the father. His wife's mother begs him to conceal her disgrace, which he promises; and affecting extraordinary filial piety, assigns as his reason for not bringing her home, the capricious behaviour of which she had been guilty towards
[pg 196] his mother. That lady, in consequence, offers to retire to the country. Pamphilus is thus reduced to the utmost perplexity; and all plausible excuses for not receiving his wife having failed, his father suspects that he had renewed his intercourse with Bacchis. He, accordingly, sends for that courtezan, who denies the present existence of any correspondence with his son; and, being eager to clear the character as well as to secure the happiness of her former lover, she offers to confirm her testimony before the family of the wife of Pamphilus. During the interview which she in consequence obtains, that lady's mother perceives on her hand a ring which had once belonged to her daughter, and which Bacchis now acknowledges to have received from Pamphilus, as one which he had taken from a girl whom he had violated, but had never seen. It is thus discovered by Pamphilus, that the lady to whom he had offered this injury before marriage was his own wife, and that he himself was father of the child to whom she had just given birth.

The fable of this play is more simple than that of Terence's other performances, in all of which he had recourse to the expedient of double plots. This, perhaps, was partly the reason of its want of success on its first and second representations. When first brought forward, in the year 589, it was interrupted by the spectators leaving the theatre, attracted by the superior interest of a boxing-match, and rope-dancers. A combat of gladiators had the like unfortunate effect when it was attempted to be again exhibited, in 594. The celebrated actor, L. Ambivius, encouraged by the success which he had experienced in reviving the condemned plays of Cæcilius, ventured to produce it a third time on the stage[317], when it received a patient hearing, and was frequently repeated. Still, however, most of the old critics and commentators speak of it as greatly inferior to the other plays of Terence. Bishop Hurd, on the contrary, in his notes on Horace, maintains, that it is the only one of his comedies which is written in the true ancient Grecian style; and that, for the genuine beauty of dramatic design, as well as the nice coherence of the fable, it must appear to every reader of true taste, the most masterly and exquisite of the whole collection. Some scenes are doubtless very finely wrought up,—as that between Pamphilus and his mother, after he first suspects the disgrace of his wife, and that in which it is revealed to him by his wife's

mother. The passage in the second scene of the first act, containing the picture of an amiable wife, who has succeeded in effacing from the heart of her husband the love of a dissolute
[pg 197] courtezan, has been highly admired. But, notwithstanding these partial beauties, and the much-applauded simplicity of the plot, there is, I think, great want of skilful management in the conduct of the fable; and if the outline be beautiful, it certainly is not so well filled up as might have been expected from the taste of the author. In the commencement, he introduces the superfluous part of Philotis, (who has no concern in the plot, and never appears afterwards,) merely to listen to the narrative of the circumstances and situation of those who are principal persons in the drama. It is likewise somewhat singular, that Pamphilus, when told by the mother of the injury done to his wife, should not have remembered his own adventure, and thus been led to suspect the real circumstances. This communication, too, ought, as it probably did in the Greek original, to have formed a scene between Pamphilus and his wife's mother; but, instead of this, Pamphilus is introduced relating to himself the whole discourse which had just passed between them. At length, the issue of the fable is disclosed by another long soliloquy from the courtezan. Indeed, all the plays of Terence abound in soliloquies very inartificially introduced; and there is none of them in which he has so much erred in this way as in the *Hecyra*. The wife of Pamphilus, too, the character calculated to give most interest, does not appear at all on the stage; and the whole play is consumed in contests between the mother-in-law and the two fathers. The characters of these old men,—the fathers of Pamphilus and his wife,—so far from being contrasted, as in the *Adelphi*, have scarcely a shade of difference. Both are covetous and passionate; very ready to vent their bad humour on their wives and children, and very ready to exculpate them when blamed by others. The uncommon and delicate situation in which Pamphilus is placed, exhibits him in an interesting and favourable point of view. He wishes to conceal what had occurred, yet is scarcely able to dissemble. Parmeno, the slave of Pamphilus, a lazy inquisitive character, is humorously kept, through the whole course of the play, in continual employment, and total ignorance. Sostrata's mild character, and the excellent behaviour of Bacchis, show, that in this play, Terence had attempted an innovation, by introducing a good mother-in-law, and an honest courtezan, whose object was to acquire a reputation of not resembling those of her profession. It appears from the Letters of Alciphron and from Athenæus, that there actually was a Greek courtezan of the name of Bacchis, distinguished from others of her class, in the time of Menander, by disinterestedness, and comparative modesty of
[pg 198] demeanour. This circumstance, added to the fact of Menander having written a play, entitled *Glycerium*, (which was the name of his mistress,) leads us to believe that the Greek comedies sometimes represented, not merely the general character of the courtezan, but individuals of that profession; and that probably the Bacchis of Apollodorus, and his imitator Terence, may have been the courtezan of this name, who rejected the splendid offers of the Persian Satrap, to remain the faithful mistress of the poor Meneclides[318].

Phormio—like the last mentioned play, was taken from the Greek of Apollodorus, who called it *Epidicazomenos*. Terence named it *Phormio*, from a parasite whose contrivances form the groundwork of the comedy, and who connects its double plot. In this play two brothers had gone abroad, each leaving a son at home, one of whom was called Antipho, and the other Phædria, under care of their servant Geta. Antipho having fallen in love with a woman apparently of mean condition, in order that he might marry her, yet at the same time possess a plausible excuse to his father for his conduct, persuades Phormio to assume the character of her patron. Phormio accordingly brings a suit against Antipho, as her nearest of kin, and he, having made no defence, is ordained in this capacity, according to an Athenian law, to marry the supposed orphan. About the same time, Phædria, the other youth, had become enamoured of a music girl; but he had no money with which to redeem her from the slave merchant. The old men, on their return home, are much disconcerted by the news of Antipho's marriage, as it had been arranged between them that he should espouse his cousin. Phormio, at the suggestion of Geta, avails himself of this distress, in order to procure money for redeeming Phædria's music girl. He consents to take Antipho's wife home to himself, provided he gets a portion with her, which being procured, is immediately laid out in the purchase of Phædria's mistress. After these plots are accomplished, it is discovered that Antipho's wife is the daughter of his uncle, by a woman at Lemnos, with whom he had an amour before marriage, and that she had come to Athens during his absence in search of her father. This is found out at the end of the third act, but the play is injudiciously protracted, after the principal interest is exhausted, with the endeavours of the old men to recover the portion which had been given to Phormio, and the dread of Chremes lest the story of his intrigue at Lemnos should come to the knowledge of his wife. The play accordingly languishes after the
[pg 199] discovery, notwithstanding all the author's attempts to support the interest of the piece by the force of pleasantry and humour.

The double plot of this play has been said to be united, by both hingeing on the part of the parasite. But this is not a sufficient union either in tragedy or comedy. I cannot, therefore, agree with Colman, "that the construction of the fable is extremely artful," or that "it contains a vivacity of intrigue perhaps even superior to that of the Eunuch, *particularly in the catastrophe*. The diction," he continues, with more truth, "is pure and elegant, and the first act as chastely written as that of the *Self-Tormentor* itself. The character of Phormio is finely separated from that of Gnatho, and is better drawn than the part of any parasite in Plautus. Nausistrata is a lively sketch of a shrewish wife, as well as Chremes an excellent draught of a hen-pecked husband, and more in the style of the modern drama than perhaps any character in ancient comedy, except the miser of Plautus. There are also some particular scenes and passages deserving of all commendation, as the description of natural and simple beauty in the person of Fannia, and that in which Geta and Phædria try to inspire some courage into Antipho, overwhelmed by the sudden arrival of his

father[319].”

It is curious that this play, which Donatus says is founded on passions almost too high for comedy, should have given rise to the most farcical of all Moliere’s productions, *Les Fourberies de Scapin*. a celebrated, though at first, an unsuccessful play, where, contrary to his usual practice, he has burlesqued rather than added dignity to the incidents of the original from which he borrowed. The plot, indeed, is but a frame to introduce the various tricks of Scapin, who, after all, is a much less agreeable cheat than Phormio: His deceptions are too palpable, and the old men are incredible fools. As in Terence, there are two fathers, Argante and Geronte, and during the absence of the former, his son Octave falls in love with and marries a girl, whom he had accidentally seen bewailing the death of her mother. At the same time, Leandre, the son of Geronte, becomes enamoured of an Egyptian, and Scapin, the valet of Octave, is employed to excuse to the father the conduct of his son, and to fleece him of as much money as might be necessary to purchase her. The first of these objects could not well be attained by Terence’s contrivance of the law-suit; and it is therefore pretended that he had been forced into the marriage by the lady’s brother, who was a bully, (Spadassin,) and to whom the father agrees to
[pg 200] give a large sum of money, that he might consent to the marriage being dissolved. It is then discovered that the girl whom Octave had married is the daughter of Geronte, and the Egyptian is found out, by the usual expedient of a bracelet, to be the long lost child of Argante. Many of the most amusing scenes and incidents are also copied from Terence, as Scapin instructing Octave to regulate his countenance and behaviour on the approach of his father—his enumeration to the father of all the different articles for which the brother of his son’s wife will require money, and the accumulating rage of Argante at each new *item*. Some scenes, however, have been added, as that where Leandre, thinking Scapin had betrayed him, and desiring him to confess, obtains a catalogue of all the *Fourberies* he had committed since he entered his service, which is taken from an Italian piece entitled *Pantalone, Padre di Famiglia*. He has also introduced from the *Pedant Joué* of Cyrano Bergerac, the device of Scapin for extorting money from Geronte, which consists in pretending that his son, having accidentally gone on board a Turkish galley, had been detained, and would be inevitably carried captive to Algiers, unless instantly ransomed. In this scene, which is the best of the play, the struggle between habitual avarice and parental tenderness, and the constant exclamation, “*Que diable alloit il faire dans cette galere du Turc*,” are extremely amusing. Boileau has reproached Moliere for having

> “Sans honte à Terence allié Tabarin,”

in allusion to the scene where Scapin persuades Geronte that the brother, accompanied by a set of bullies, is in search of him, and stuffs him, for concealment, into a sack, which he afterwards beats with a stick. This is compounded of two scenes in the French farces, the *Piphagne* and the *Francisquine* of Tabarin, and, like the originals from which it is derived, is quite farcical and extravagant:—

> “Dans ce sac ridicule ou Scapin s’enveloppe,
> Je ne reconnois plus l’auteur du Misanthrope[320].”

The chief improvement which Moliere has made on Terence is the reservation of the discovery to the end; but the double discovery is improbable. The introduction of Hyacinthe and Zerbinette on the stage, is just as unsuccessful as the attempt of Baron to present us, in his *Andrienne*, with a
[pg 201] lady corresponding to Glycerium. Moliere’s Hyacinthe is quite insipid and uninteresting, while Zerbinette retains too much of the Egyptian, and is too much delighted with the cheats of Scapin, to become the wife of an honest man.

From the above sketches some idea may have been formed of Terence’s plots, most of which were taken from the Greek stage, on which he knew they had already pleased. He has given proofs, however, of his taste and judgment, in the additions and alterations made on those borrowed subjects; and I doubt not, had he lived an age later, when all the arts were in full glory at Rome, and the empire at its height of power and splendour, he would have found domestic subjects sufficient to supply his scene with interest and variety, and would no longer have accounted it a greater merit—“Græcas transferre quam proprias scribere.”

Terence was a more rigid observer than his Roman predecessors of the unities of time and place. Whatever difference of opinion may be entertained with regard to the preservation of these unities in tragedy, since great results are often slowly prepared, and in various quarters, there can be no doubt that they are appropriate in comedy, which, moving in a domestic circle, and having no occasion to wander, like the tragic or epic muse, through distant regions, should bring its intrigue to a rapid conclusion. Terence, however, would have done better not to have adhered so strictly to unity of place, and to have allowed the scene to change at least from the street or portico in front of a house, to the interior of the dwelling. From his apparently regarding even this slight change as inadmissible, the most sprightly and interesting parts of the action are often either absurdly represented as passing on the street, though of a nature which must have been transacted within doors, or are altogether excluded. A striking example of the latter occurs in the *Eunuchus*, where the discovery of Chærea by his father in the eunuch’s garb has been related, instead of being represented. Plautus, who was of bolder genius, varies the place of action, when the variation suits his great purpose of merriment and jest.

But though Terence has perhaps too rigidly observed the unities of time and place, in none of his dramas, with a single exception, has that of plot been adhered to. The simplicity and exact unity

of fable in the Greek comedies would have been insipid to a people not thoroughly instructed in the genuine beauties of the drama. Such plays were of too thin contexture to satisfy the somewhat gross and lumpish taste of a Roman audience. The Latin poets, therefore, bethought themselves of combining two stories into one, and this junction, which we call the double plot, by
[pg 202] affording the opportunity of more incidents, and a greater variety of action, best contributed to the gratification of those whom they had to please. But of all the Latin comedians, Terence appears to have practised this art the most assiduously. Plautus has very frequently single plots, which he was enabled to support by the force of drollery. Terence, whose genius lay another way, or whose taste was abhorrent from all sort of buffoonery, had recourse to the other expedient of double plots; and this, I suppose, is what gained him the popular reputation of being the most artful writer for the stage. The *Hecyra* is the only one of his comedies of the true ancient cast, and we know how unsuccessful it was in the representation[321]. In managing a double plot, the great difficulty is, whether also to divide the interest. One thing, however, is clear, that the part which is episodical, and has least interest, should be unravelled first; for if the principal interest be exhausted, the subsidiary intrigue drags on heavily. The *Andrian*, *Self Tormentor*, and *Phormio*, are all faulty in this respect. On the whole, however, the plots of Terence are, in most respects, judiciously laid: The incidents are selected with taste, connected with inimitable art, and painted with exquisite grace and beauty.

Next to the management of the plot, the characters and manners represented are the most important points in a comedy; and in these Terence was considered by the ancients as surpassing all their comic poets.—"In argumentis," says Varro, "Cæcilius palmam poscit, in ethesi Terentius." In this department of his art he shows that comprehensive knowledge of the humours and inclinations of mankind, which enabled him to delineate characters as well as manners, with a genuine and apparently unstudied simplicity. All the inferior passions which form the range of comedy are so nicely observed, and accurately expressed, that we nowhere find a truer or more lively representation of human nature. He seems to have formed in his mind such a perfect idea both of his high and low characters, that they never for a moment forget their age or situation, whether they are to speak in the easy indifferent tone of polished society, or with the natural expression of passion. Nor do his paintings of character consist merely of a single happy stroke unexpectedly introduced: His delineations are always in the right place, and so harmonize with the whole, that every word is just what the person might be supposed to say under the circumstances in which he is placed:—

[pg 203] "Contemplez de quel air un pere dans Terence,
Vient d'un fils amoureux gourmander l'imprudence;
De quel air cet amant ecoute ses leçons,
Et court chez sa maitresse oublier ces chansons:
Ce n'est pas un portrait, un image semblable;
C'est un amant, un fils, un pere veritable[322]."

The characters, too, of Terence are never overstrained by ridicule, which, if too much affected, produces creatures of the fancy, which for a while may be more diverting than portraits drawn from nature, but can never be so permanently pleasing. This constitutes the great difference between Plautus and Terence, as also between the new and old comedy of the Greeks. The old comedy presented scenes of uninterrupted gaiety and raillery and ridicule, and nothing was spared which could become the object of sarcasm. The dramatic school which succeeded it attracted applause by beauty of situation and moral sentiment. In like manner, Terence makes us almost serious by the interest and affection which he excites for his characters. In the *Andria* we are touched with all Pamphilus' concern, we feel all his reflections to be just, and pity his perplexity. The characters of Terence, indeed, are of the same description with those of Plautus; but his slaves and parasites and captains are not so farcical, nor his panders and courtezans so coarse, as those of his predecessor. The slave-dealers in the *Adelphi* and *Phormio* are rather merchants greedy of gain than shameless agents of vice, and are not very different from Madame La Ressource, in Regnard's elegant comedy, *Le Joueur*. His courtezans, instead of being invariably wicked and rapacious, are often represented as good and beneficent. It was a courtezan who received the dying mother of the Andrian, and, while expiring herself, affectionately intrusted the orphan to the generous protection of Pamphilus. It is a courtezan who, in the *Eunuchus*, discovers the family of the young Pamphila, and, in the *Hecyra*, brings about the understanding essential to the happiness of all. From their mode of life, and not interposing much beyond their domestic circle, the manners of modest women were not generally painted with any great taste by the ancients; but Terence may perhaps be considered as an exception. Nausistrata is an excellent picture of a matron not of the highest rank or dignity, as is also Sostrata in the *Hecyra*.

The style of wit and humour must of course correspond with that of the characters and manners. Accordingly, the plays of Terence are not much calculated to excite ludicrous emotions, and have
[pg 204] been regarded as deficient in comic force. His muse is of the most perfect and elegant proportions, but she fails in animation, and spirit. It was for this want of the *vis comica* that Terence was upbraided by Julius Cæsar, in lines which, in other respects, bear a just tribute of applause to this elegant dramatist:—

"Tu quoque tu in summis, O dimidiate Menander,
Poneris, et merito, puri sermonis amator:
Lenibus atque utinam scriptis adjuncta foret vis

Comica, ut æquato virtus polleret honore
Cum Græcis, neque in hac despectus parte jaceres.
Unum hoc maceror, et doleo tibi deesse, Terenti."

From the prologue to the *Phormio* we learn that a clamour had also been raised by his contemporaries against Terence, because his dialogue was insipid, and wanted that comic heightening which the taste of the age required:—

"Quas fecit fabulas,
Tenui esse oratione et scriptura levi."

The plays of Terence, it must be admitted, are not calculated to excite immoderate laughter, but his pleasantries are brightened by all the charms of chaste and happy expression—thus resembling in some measure the humour with which we are so much delighted in the page of Addison, and which pleases the more in proportion as it is studied and contemplated. There are some parts of the *Eunuchus* which I think cannot be considered as altogether deficient in the *vis comica*, as also Demea's climax of disasters in the *Adelphi*, and a scene in the *Andria*, founded on the misconceptions of Mysis.

The beauties of style and language, I suppose, must be considered as but secondary excellences in the drama. Were they primary merits, Terence would deserve to be placed at the head of all comic poets who have written for the stage, on account of the consummate elegance and purity of his diction. It is a singular circumstance, and without example in the literary history of any other country, that the language should have received its highest perfection, in point of elegance and grace, combined with the most perfect simplicity, from the pen of a foreigner and a slave. But it so happened, that the countryman of Hannibal, and the freedman of Terentius Lucanus, gave to the Roman tongue all those beauties, in a degree which the courtiers of the Augustan age itself did not surpass. Nor can this excellence be altogether accounted for by his intimacy with Scipio and Lælius, in whose families the Latin language was spoken with hereditary purity, since
[pg 205] it could only have been the merit of his dramas which first attracted their regard; and indeed, from an anecdote above related, of what occurred while reading his *Andria* to a dramatic censor, it is evident that this play must have been written ere he enjoyed the sunshine of patrician patronage. For this *Ineffabilis amœnitas*, as it is called by Heinsius, he was equally admired by his own contemporaries and by the writers in the golden period of Roman literature. He is called by Cæsar *puri sermonis amator*, and Cicero characterizes him as—

"Quicquid come loquens, ac omnia dulcia dicens."

Even in the last age of Latin poetry, and when his pure simplicity was so different from the style affected by the writers of the day, he continued to be regarded as the model of correct composition. Ausonius, in his beautiful poem addressed to his grandson, hails him on account of his style, as the ornament of Latium—

"Tu quoque qui Latium lecto sermone, Terenti,
Comis, et adstricto percurris pulpita socco,
Ad nova vix memorem diverbia coge senectam[323]."

Among all the Latin writers, indeed, from Ennius to Ausonius, we meet with nothing so simple, so full of grace and delicacy—in fine, nothing that can be compared to the comedies of Terence for elegance of dialogue—presenting a constant flow of easy, genteel, unaffected discourse, which never subsides into vulgarity or grossness, and never rises higher than the ordinary level of polite conversation. Of this, indeed, he was so careful, that when he employed any sentence which he had found in the tragic poets, he stripped it of that air of grandeur and majesty, which rendered it unsuitable for common life, and comedy. In reading the dialogue of Simo in the *Andria*, and of Micio in the *Adelphi*, we almost think we are listening to the conversation of Scipio Africanus, and the *mitis sapientia Læli*. The narratives, in particular, possess a beautiful and picturesque simplicity. Cicero, in his treatise *De Oratore*, has bestowed prodigious applause on that with which the *Andria* commences. "The picture," he observes, "of the manners of Pamphilus—the death and funeral of Chrysis—and the grief of her supposed sister, are all represented in the most delightful colours."—Diderot, speaking of the style of Terence, says, "C'est une onde pure et
[pg 206] transparente, qui coule toujours egalement, et qui ne prend de vitesse, que ce qu'elle en reçoit de la pente et du terrein. Point d'esprit, nul etalage de sentiment, aucune sentence qui ait l'air epigrammatique, jamais de ces definitions qui ne seroient placées que dans Nicole ou la Rochefoucauld."

As to what may be strictly called the poetical style of Terence, it has been generally allowed that he has used very great liberties in his versification[324]. Politian divided his plays (which in the MSS. resemble prose) into lines, but a separation was afterwards more correctly made by Erasmus. Priscian says, that Terence used more licenses than any other writer. Bentley, after Priscian, admitted every variety of Iambic and Trochaic measure; and such was the apparent number of irregular quantities, and mixture of different species of verse, that Westerhovius declares, that in order to reduce the lines to their original accuracy, it would be necessary to evoke Lælius and Scipio from the shades. Mr Hawkins, in his late Inquiry into the Nature of Greek and Latin poetry, has attempted to show that the whole doctrine of poetical licenses is contrary to reason and common sense; that no such deviation from the laws of prosody could ever have been introduced by Terence; and that where his verses apparently require licenses, they are

either corrupt and ill-regulated, or may be reduced to the proper standard, on the system of admitting that all equivalent feet may come in room of the fundamental feet or measures. On these principles, by changing the situation of the quantities, by allowing that one long syllable may stand for two short, or *vice versa*, there will not be occasion for a single poetical license, which is in fact nothing less than a breach of the rules of prosody.

After having considered the plays of Plautus and of Terence, one is naturally led to institute a comparison between these two celebrated dramatists. People, in general, are very apt to judge of the talents of poets by the absolute merits of their works, without at all taking into view the relative circumstances of their age and situation, or the progress of improvement during the period in which they lived. No one recollects that Tasso's *Rinaldo* was composed in ten months, and at the age of seventeen; and, in like manner, we are apt to forget the difference between writing comedies while labouring at a mill, and basking in the Alban villa of Scipio or Lælius. The improvement, too, of the times, brought the works of Terence to perfection and maturity, as
[pg 207] much as his own genius. It is evident, that he was chiefly desirous to recommend himself to the approbation of a select few, who were possessed of true wit and judgment, and the dread of whose censure ever kept him within the bounds of correct taste; while the sole object of Plautus, on the other hand, was to excite the merriment of an audience of little refinement. If, then, we merely consider the intrinsic merit of their productions, without reference to the circumstances or situation of the authors, still Plautus will be accounted superior in that vivacity of action, and variety of incident, which raise curiosity, and hurry on the mind to the conclusion. We delight, on the contrary, to linger on every scene, almost on every sentence, of Terence. Sometimes there are chasms in Plautus's fables, and the incidents do not properly adhere—in Terence, all the links of the action depend on each other. Plautus has more variety in his exhibition of characters and manners, but his pictures are often overcharged, while those of Terence are never more highly coloured than becomes the modesty of nature. Plautus's sentences have a peculiar smartness, which conveys the thought with clearness, and strikes the imagination strongly, so that the mind is excited to attention, and retains the idea with pleasure; but they are often forced and affected, and of a description little used in the commerce of the world; whereas every word in Terence has direct relation to the business of life, and the feelings of mankind. The language of Plautus is more rich and luxuriant than that of Terence, but is far from being so equal, uniform, and chaste. It is often stained with vulgarity, and sometimes swells beyond the limits of comic dialogue, while that of Terence is *puro simillimus amni*. The verses of Plautus are, as he himself calls them, *numeri innumeri*; and Hermann declares, that, at least as now printed, *omni vitiorum genere abundant*[325]. Terence attends more to elegance and delicacy in the expression of passion—Plautus to comic expression. In fact, the great object of Plautus seems to have been to excite laughter among the audience, and in this object he completely succeeded; but for its attainment he has sacrificed many graces and beauties of the drama. There are two sorts of humour—one consisting in words and action, the other in matter. Now, Terence abounds chiefly in the last species, Plautus in the first; and the pleasantries of the older dramatist, which were so often flat, low, or extravagant, finally drew down the censure of Horace, while his successor was extolled by that poetical critic as the most consummate master of dramatic art. "In short," says Crusius,
[pg 208] "Plautus is more gay, Terence more chaste—the first has more genius and fire, the latter more manners and solidity. Plautus excels in low comedy and ridicule, Terence in drawing just characters, and maintaining them to the last. The plots of both are artful, but Terence's are more apt to languish, whilst Plautus's spirit maintains the action with vigour. His invention was greatest; Terence's, art and management. Plautus gives the stronger, Terence a more elegant delight. Plautus appears the better comedian of the two, as Terence the finer poet. The former has more compass and variety, the latter more regularity and truth, in his characters. Plautus shone most on the stage; Terence pleases best in the closet. Men of refined taste would prefer Terence; Plautus diverted both patrician and plebeian[326]."

Some intimations of particular plays, both of Plautus and Terence, have already been pointed out; but independently of more obvious plagiarisms, these dramatists were the models of all comic writers in the different nations of Europe, at the first revival of the drama. Their works were the prototypes of the regular Italian comedy, as it appeared in the plays of Ariosto, Aretine, Ludovico Dolce, and Battista Porta. In these, the captain and parasite are almost constantly introduced, with addition of the *pedante*, who is usually the pedagogue of the young *innamorato*. Such erudite plays were the only printed dramas (though the *Commedie dell' Arte* were acted for the amusement of the vulgar,) till the beginning of the 17th century, when Flaminio Scala first *published* his *Commedie dell' Arte*. The old Latin plays were also the models of the earliest dramas in Spain, previous to the introduction of the comedy of intrigue, which was invented by Lopez de Rueda, and perfected by Calderon. We find the first traces of the Spanish drama in a close imitation of the *Amphitryon*, in 1515, by Villalobos, the physician of Charles V., which was immediately succeeded by a version of Terence, by Pedro de Abril, and translations of the Portuguese comedies of Vasconcellos[327], which were themselves written in the manner of Plautus. There is likewise a good deal of the spirit of Plautus and Terence in the old English comedy, particularly in the characters. A panegyrist on Randolph's *Jealous Lovers*, which was
[pg 209] published in 1632, says, "that it should be conserved in some great library, that if through chance or injury of time, Plautus and Terence should be lost, their united merit might be recognized. For, in this play, thou hast drawn the pander, the gull, the jealous lover, the doating father, the shark, and the crust wife."

The consideration of the servile manner in which the dramatists, as well as novelists, of one country, have copied from their predecessors in another, may be adduced in some degree as a

proof of the old philosophical aphorism, *Nihil est in intellectu quod non prius fuerit in sensu*; and also of the incapacity of the most active and fertile imagination, greatly to diversify the common characters and incidents of life. One would suppose, previous to examination, that the varieties, both of character and situation, would be boundless; but on review, we find a Plautus copying from the Greek comic writers, and, in turn, even an Ariosto scarcely diverging from the track of Plautus. When we see the same characters only in new dresses, performing the same actions, and repeating the same jests, we are tempted to exclaim, that everything is weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable, and are taught a lesson of melancholy, even from the Mask of Mirth.

While Plautus, Cæcilius, Afranius, and Terence, raised the comic drama to high perfection and celebrity, Pacuvius and Attius attempted, with considerable success, the noblest subjects of the Greek tragedies.

PACUVIUS,

who was the nephew of Ennius[328], by a sister of that poet, was born at Brundusium, in the year 534. At Rome he became intimately acquainted with Lælius, who, in Cicero's treatise *De Amicitiâ*, calls Pacuvius his host and friend: He also enjoyed, like Terence, the intimacy of Scipio Africanus; but he did not profit so much as the comic writer by his acquaintance with these illustrious Romans for the improvement of his style. There is an idle story, that Pacuvius had three wives, all of whom successively hanged themselves on the same tree; and that lamenting this to Attius, who was married, he begged for a slip of it to plant in his own garden[329]; an anecdote which has been very seriously confuted by Annibal di Leo, in his learned Memoir on Pacuvius. This poet also
[pg 210] employed himself in painting: he was one of the first of the Romans who attained any degree of eminence in that elegant art, and particularly distinguished himself by the picture which he executed for the temple of Hercules, in the *Forum Boarium*[330]. He published his last piece at the age of eighty[331]; after which, being oppressed with old age, and afflicted with perpetual bodily illness, he retired, for the enjoyment of its soft air and mild winters, to Tarentum[332], where he died, having nearly completed his ninetieth year[333]. An elegant epitaph, supposed to have been written by himself, is quoted, with much commendation, by Aulus Gellius, who calls it *verecundissimum et purissimum*[334]. It appears to have been inscribed on a tombstone which stood by the side of a public road, according to a custom of the Romans, who placed their monuments near highways, that the spot where their remains were deposited might attract observation, and the departed spirit receive the valediction of passing travellers:

> "Adolescens, tametsi properas, hoc te saxum rogat,
> Uti ad se aspicias; deinde, quod scriptum est, legas.
> Hic sunt poetæ Marcei Pacuviei sita
> Ossa. Hoc volebam nescius ne esses—Vale[335]."

Though a few fragments of the tragedies of Pacuvius remain, our opinion of his dramatic merits can be formed only at second hand, from the observations of those critics who wrote while his works were yet extant. Cicero, though he blames his style, and characterizes him as a poet *male loquutus*[336], places him on the same level for tragedy as Ennius for epic poetry, or Cæcilius for comedy; and he mentions, in his treatise *De Oratore*, that his verses were by many considered as highly laboured and adorned.—"Omnes apud hunc ornati elaboratique sunt versus." It was in this laboured polish of versification, and skill in the dramatic conduct of the scene, that the excellence
[pg 211] of Pacuvius chiefly consisted; for so the lines of Horace have been usually interpreted, where, speaking of the public opinion entertained concerning the different dramatic writers of Rome, he says,—

> "Ambigitur quoties uter utro sit prior: aufert
> Pacuvius docti famam senis, Attius alti."

And the same meaning must be affixed to the passage in Quintilian,—"Virium tamen Attio plus tribuitur; Pacuvium videri doctiorem, qui esse docti adfectant, volunt[337]." Most other Latin critics, though on the whole they seem to prefer Attius, allow Pacuvius to be the more correct writer.

The names are still preserved of about 20 tragedies of Pacuvius—*Anchises*, *Antiope*, *Armorum Judicium*, *Atalanta*, *Chryses*, *Dulorestes*, *Hermione*, *Iliona*, *Medus*, *Medea*, *Niptra*, *Orestes et Pylades*, *Paulus*, *Peribœa*, *Tantalus*, *Teucer*, *Thyestes*. Of these the *Antiope* was one of the most distinguished. It was regarded by Cicero as a great national tragedy, and an honour to the Roman name.—"Quis enim," says he, "tam inimicus pene nomini Romano est, qui Ennii Medeam, aut Antiopam Pacuvii, spernat, aut rejiciat?" Persius, however, ridicules a passage in this tragedy, where Antiope talks of propping her melancholy heart with misfortunes, by which she means, (I suppose,) that she fortunately had so many griefs all around her heart, that it was well bolstered up, and would not break or bend so easily as it must have done, had it been supported by fewer distresses—

> "Sunt quos Pacuviusque et verrucosa moretur

Antiope, ærumnis cor luctificabile fulta."

The *Armorum Judicium* was translated from Æschylus. With regard to the *Dulorestes*, (Orestes Servus,) there has been a good deal of discussion and difficulty. Nævius, Ennius, and Attius, are all said to have written tragedies which bore the title of *Dulorestes*; but a late German writer has attempted, at great length, to show that this is a misconception; and that all the fragments, which have been classed with the remains of these three dramatic poets, belong to the *Dulorestes* of Pacuvius, who was in truth the only Latin poet who wrote a tragedy with this appellation. What the tenor or subject of the play, however, may have been, he admits is difficult to determine, as the different passages, still extant, refer to very different periods of the life of Orestes; which, I think, is rather adverse to his idea, that all these fragments were written by the same person, and
[pg 212] belonged to the same tragedy, unless, indeed, Pacuvius had utterly set at defiance the observance of the celebrated unities of the ancient drama. On the whole, however, he agrees with Thomas Stanley, in his remarks on the *Chœphoræ* of Æschylus, that the subject of the *Chœphoræ*, which is the vengeance taken by Orestes on the murderers of his father, is also that of the *Dulorestes* of Pacuvius[338]. Some of the fragments refer to this as an object not yet accomplished:—

"Utinam nunc maturescam ingenio, ut meum patrem
Ulcisci queam." ——

The *Hermione* turned on the murder of Pyrrhus by Orestes at the instigation of Hermione. Cicero, in his Treatise *De Amicitia*, mentions, in the person of Lælius, the repeated acclamations which had recently echoed through the theatre at the representation of the *new play* of his friend Pacuvius, in that scene where Pylades and Orestes are introduced before the king, who, being ignorant which of them is Orestes, whom he had predetermined should be put to death, each insists, in order to save the life of his friend, that he himself is the real person in question. Delrio alleges that the *new play* here alluded to by Cicero was the *Hermione*; but that play, as well as the *Dulorestes*, related to much earlier events than the friendly contest between Pylades and Orestes, which took place at the court of Thoas, King of Tauris, and was the concluding scene in the dramatic life of Orestes, being long subsequent to the murder of his mother, his trial in presence of the Argives, or absolution at Athens before the Areopagus. Accordingly, Tiraboschi states positively that this *new play* of Pacuvius, which obtained so much applause, was his *Pylades et Orestes*[339].

In the *Iliona*, the scene where the shade of Polydorus, who had been assassinated by the King of Thrace, appears to his sister Iliona, was long the favourite of a Roman audience, who seem to have indulged in the same partiality for such spectacles as we still entertain for the goblins in *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*.

All the plays above mentioned were imitated or translated by Pacuvius from the Greek. His *Paulus*, however, was of his own invention, and was the first Latin tragedy formed on a Roman subject. Unfortunately there are only five lines of it extant, and these do not enable us to
[pg 213] ascertain, which Roman of the name of Paulus gave title to the tragedy. It was probably either Paulus Æmilius, who fell at Cannæ, or his son, whose story was a memorable instance of the instability of human happiness, as he lost both his children at the moment when he triumphed for his victory over Perseus of Macedon.

From no one play of Pacuvius are there more than fifty lines preserved, and these are generally very much detached. The longest passages which we have in continuation are a fragment concerning Fortune, in the *Hermione*—the exclamations of Ulysses, while writhing under the agony of a recent wound, in the *Niptra*, and the following fine description of a sea-storm introduced in the *Dulorestes*:—

"Interea, prope jam occidente sole, inhorrescit mare;
Tenebræ conduplicantur, noctisque et nimbûm occæcat nigror;
Flamma inter nubes coruscat, cœlum tonitru contremit,
Grando, mista imbri largifluo, subita turbine præcipitans cadit;
Undique omnes venti erumpunt, sævi existunt turbines,
Fervet æstu Pelagus." ——

Such lines, however, as these, it must be confessed, are more appropriate in epic, or descriptive poetry, than in tragedy.

It does not appear that the tragedies of Pacuvius had much success or popularity in his own age. He was obliged to have recourse for his subjects to foreign mythology and unknown history. Iphigenia and Orestes were always more or less strangers to a Roman audience, and the whole drama in which these and similar personages figured, never attained in Rome to a healthy and perfect existence. Comedy, on the other hand, addressed itself to the feelings of all. There were prodigal sons, avaricious fathers, and rapacious courtezans, in Rome as well as in Greece[340]. But it requires a certain cultivation of mind and tenderness of heart to enjoy the representation of a regular tragedy. The plebeians thronged to the theatre for the sake of merriment, and the patricians were still too much occupied with the projects of their own ambition, to weep over the woes of Antigone or Electra.

Pacuvius, accordingly, had fewer imitators than Plautus. Indeed, for a long period he had none of

much note, except

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ATTIUS,

or Accius, as he is sometimes, but improperly, called, who brought forward his first play when thirty years old, in the same season in which Pacuvius, having reached the age of eighty, gave his last to the public[341]. Now, as Pacuvius would be eighty in 614, Attius, according to this calculation, must have been born in 584. It has been questioned, however, if he was born so early, since Valerius Maximus relates a story of his refusing to rise from his place on the entrance of Julius Cæsar into the College of Poets, because in that place they did not contest the prize of birth, but of learning[342],—which disrespect, if he came into the world in 584, he could not have survived to offer to the dictator, Julius Cæsar, who was not born till 654. This collector of anecdotes, however, may probably allude either to some other poet of the name of Attius, or to some other individual of the Julian family, than the Julius Cæsar who subverted the liberties of his country. At all events it is evident, that Attius lived to extreme old age. If born in 584, he must have been 63 years old at the birth of Cicero, who came into the world in 647. Now, Cicero mentions not only having seen him, but having heard from his own mouth opinions concerning the eloquence of his friend D. Brutus, and other speakers of his time[343]. Supposing this conversation took place even when Cicero was so young as seventeen, Attius must have lived at least to the age of eighty.

It is certain, that Attius had begun to write tragedies before the death of Pacuvius. Aulus Gellius relates, as a well-known anecdote, that Attius, while on his way to Asia, was detained, for some time at Tarentum, whither Pacuvius had retired, and was invited to pass a few days with the veteran poet. During his stay he read to his host the tragedy of *Atreus*, which was one of his earliest productions. Pacuvius declared his verses to be high sounding and lofty, but he remarked that they were a little harsh, and wanted mellowness. Attius acknowledged the truth of the observation, which he said gave him much satisfaction; for that genius resembled apples, which when produced hard and sour, grow mellow in maturity, while those which are unseasonably soft do not become ripe, but rotten[344]. His expectations, however, were scarcely fulfilled, and the produce of his more advanced years was nearly as harsh as what he had borne in youth. He
[pg 215] seems, nevertheless, to have entertained at all times a good opinion of his own poetical talents: for, though a person of diminutive size, he got a huge statue of himself placed in a conspicuous niche in the Temple of the Muses[345]. Nor does his vanity appear to have exceeded the high esteem in which he was held by his countrymen. Such was the respect paid to him, that a player was severely punished for mentioning his name on the stage[346]. Decius Brutus, who was consul in 615, and was distinguished for his victories in Spain, received him into the same degree of intimacy to which Ennius had been admitted by the elder, and Terence by the younger, Scipio Africanus: and such was his estimation of the verses of this tragedian, that he inscribed them over the entrance to a temple adorned by him with the spoils of enemies whom he had conquered[347]. From the high opinion generally entertained of the force and eloquence of his tragedies, Attius was asked why he did not plead causes in the Forum; to which he replied, that he made the characters in his tragedies speak what he chose, but that, in the Forum, his adversaries might say things he did not like, and which he could not answer[348].

Horace, in the same line where he celebrates the dramatic skill of Pacuvius, alludes to the loftiness of Attius,—

——“Aufert
Pacuvius docti famam senis—Attius alti;”

by which is probably meant sublimity both of sentiment and expression. A somewhat similar quality is intended to be expressed in the epithet applied to him by Ovid:—

“Ennius arte carens, animosique Attius oris,
Casurum nullo tempore nomen habent.”

It would appear from Ovid likewise, that he generally chose atrocious subjects for the arguments of his tragedies:—

“Nec liber indicium est animi, sed honesta voluptas,
Plurima mulcendis auribus apta ferens:
Attius esset atrox, conviva Terentius esset,
Essent pugnaces qui fera bella canunt[349].”

By advice of Pacuvius, Attius adopted such subjects as had already been brought forward on the
[pg 216] Athenian stage; and we accordingly find that he has dramatized the well-known stories of Andromache, Philoctetes, Antigone, &c. There are larger fragments extant from these tragedies than from the dramatic works of Ennius or Pacuvius. One of the longest and finest passages is that in the *Medea*, where a shepherd discovering, from the top of a mountain, the vessel which

conveyed the Argonauts on their expedition, thus expresses his wonder and admiration at an object he had never before seen:—

—— “Tanta moles labitur
Fremebunda ex alto, ingenti sonitu et spiritu
Præ se undas volvit, vortices vi suscitat,
Ruit prolapsa, pelagus respergit, reflat:
Ita num interruptum credas nimbum volvier,
Num quod sublime ventis expulsum rapi
Saxum, aut procellis, vel globosos turbines
Existere ictos, undis concursantibus?
Num quas terrestres pontus strages conciet;
Aut forte Triton fuscinâ evertens specus,
Subter radices penitus undanti in freto
Molem ex profundo saxeam ad cœlum vomit?”

With this early specimen of Latin verse, it may be agreeable to compare a corresponding passage in one of our most ancient English poets. A shepherd, in Spenser’s *Epilogue to the Shepherd’s Calendar*, thus describes his astonishment at the sight of a ship:—

“For as we stood there waiting on the strand,
Behold a huge great vessel to us came,
Dancing upon the waters back to land,
As if it scorn’d the danger of the same.

Yet was it but a wooden frame, and frail,
Glued together with some subtle matter:
Yet had it arms, and wings, and head, and tail,
And life, to move itself upon the water.

Strange thing! how bold and swift the monster was!
That neither cared for wind, nor hail, nor rain,
Nor swelling waves, but thorough them did pass
So proudly, that she made them roar again.”

Among the shorter fragments of Attius we meet with many scattered sentiments, which have been borrowed by subsequent poets and moral writers. The expression, “oderint dum metuant,” occurs in the *Atreus*. Thus, too, in the *Armorum Judicium*,—

“Nam trophæum ferre me a forti pulchrum est viro;
Si autem et vincar, vinci a tali, nullum est probrum.”

A line in the same play—

“Virtuti sis par—dispar fortunis patris,”

[pg 217] has suggested to Virgil the affecting address—

“Disce, puer, virtutem ex me, verumque laborem;
Fortunam ex aliis: ——”

This play, which turns on the contest of Ajax and Ulysses for the arms of Achilles, has also supplied a great deal to Ovid. The tragic poet makes Ajax say—

“Quid est cur componere ausis mihi te, aut me tibi.”

In like manner, Ajax, in his speech in Ovid—

—— “Agimus, prô Jupiter, inquit,
Ante rates causam, et mecum confertur Ulysses!”

There are two lines in the *Philoctetes*, which present a fine image of discomfort and desolation—

“Contempla hanc sedem, in qua ego novem hiemes, saxo stratus, pertuli,
Ubi horrifer aquilonis stridor gelidas molitur nives[350].”

Most of the plays of Attius, as we have seen, were taken from the Greek tragedians. Two of them, however, the *Brutus* and the *Decius*, hinged on Roman subjects, and were both probably written in compliment to the family of his patron, Decius Brutus. The subject of the former was the expulsion of the Tarquins: but the only passage of it extant, is the dream of Tarquin, and its interpretation, which have been preserved by Cicero in his work *De Divinatione*. Tarquin’s dream was, that he had been overthrown by a ram which a shepherd had presented to him, and that while lying wounded on his back, he had looked up to the sky, and observed that the sun, having changed his course, was journeying from west to east. The first part of this dream being interpreted, was a warning, that he would be expelled from his kingdom by one whom he accounted as stupid as a sheep; and the solar phenomenon portended a popular change in the government. The interpreter adds, that such strange dreams could not have occurred without the

purpose of some special manifestation, but that no attention need be paid to those which merely present to us the daily transactions of life—

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> “Nam quæ in vitâ usurpant homines, cogitant, curant, vident,
> Quæque agunt vigilantes, agitantque, ea si cui in somno accidunt.
> Minus mirum est ——”

In his tragedies, indeed, Attius rather shows a contempt for dreams, and prodigies, and the science of augury—

> “Nihil credo auguribus qui aures verbis divitant
> Alienas, suas ut auro locupletent domos.”

The argument of Attius’ other drama, founded on a Roman subject, and belonging to the class called *Prætextatæ*, was the patriotic self-devotion of Publius Decius, who, when his army could no longer sustain the onset of the foe, threw himself into the thickest of the combat, and was despatched by the darts of the enemy. There were at least two of the family of Decii, a father and son, who had successively devoted themselves in this manner—the former in a contest with the Latins, the latter in a war with the Gauls, leagued to the Etruscans, in the year of Rome 457. No doubt, however, can exist, that it was the son who was the subject of the tragedy of *Attius*—in the first place, because he twice talks of following the example of his father—

> “—— Patrio
> Exemplo dicabo me, atque animam devotabo hostibus.”

And again—

> “Quibus rem summam et patriam nostram quondam adauctavit pater.”

And, in the next place, he refers, in two different passages, to the opposing host of the Gauls—

> —— “Gallei, voce canora ac fremitu,
> Peragrant minitabiliter ——
> * * * * *
> Vim Gallicam obduc contra in acie.” ——

Horace, as is well known, bestowed some commendation on those dramatists who had chosen events of domestic history as subjects for their tragedies—

> “Nec minimum meruere decus, vestigia Græca
> Ausi deserere, et celebrare domestica facta[351].”

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Dramas taken from our own annals, excite a public interest, and afford the best, as well as easiest opportunity of attracting the mind, by frequent reference to our manners, prejudices, or customs. It may, at first view, seem strange, that the Romans, who were a national people, and whose epics were generally founded on events in their own history, should, when they did make such frequent attempts at the composition of tragedy, have so seldom selected their arguments from the ancient annals or traditions of their country. These traditions were, perhaps, not very fertile in pathetic or mournful incident, but they afforded subjects rich, beyond all others, in tragic energy and elevation; and even in the range of female character, in which the ancient drama was most defective, Lucretia and Virginia were victims as interesting as Iphigenia or Alcestis. The tragic writers of modern times have borrowed from these very sources many subjects of a highly poetical nature, and admirably calculated for scenic representation. The furious combat of the Horatii and Curiatii, the stern patriotic firmness of Brutus, the internal conflicts of Coriolanus, the tragic fate of Virginia, and the magnanimous self-devotion of Regulus, have been dramatized with success, in the different languages of modern Europe. But those names, which to us sound so lofty, may, to the natives, have been too familiar for the dignity essential to tragedy. In Rome, besides the risk of offending great families, the Roman subjects were of too recent a date to have acquired that venerable cast, which the tragic muse demands, and time alone can bestow. They were not at sufficient distance to have dropped all those mean and disparaging circumstances, which unavoidably adhere to recent events, and in some measure sink the noblest modern transactions to the level of ordinary life. This seems to have been strongly felt by Sophocles and Euripides, who preferred the incidents connected with the sieges of Troy and of Thebes, rendered gigantic only by the mists of antiquity, to the real and almost living glories of Marathon or Thermopylæ. But the Romans had no families corresponding to the race of Atreus or Œdipus—they had no princess endowed with the beauty of Helen—no monarch invested with the dignity of Agamemnon—they had, in short, no epic cycle on which to form tragedies, like the Greeks, whose minds had been conciliated by Homer in favour of Ajax and Ulysses[352]. “The most interesting subjects of tragedies,” says Adam Smith[353], “are the misfortunes

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of virtuous and magnanimous kings and princes;” but the Roman kings were a detested race, for whose rank and qualities there was no admiration, and for whose misfortunes there could be no sympathy. Accordingly, after some few and not very successful attempts to dramatize national incidents, the Latin tragic writers relapsed into their former practice, as appears from the titles of all the tragedies which were brought out from the time of Attius to that of Seneca.

Hence it follows, that those remarks, which have been repeated to satiety with regard to the subjects of the Greek theatre, are likewise applicable to those of the Roman stage. There would

be the same dignified misfortune displayed in nobler and imposing attitudes—the same observance of the unities—the same dramatic phrensy, remorse, and love, proceeding from the vengeance of the gods, and exhibited in the fate of Ajax, Orestes, and Phædra—the same struggle against that predominant destiny, which was exalted even above the gods of Olympus, and by which the ill-fated race of Atreus was agitated and pursued. The Latin, like the Greek tragedies, must have excited something of the same feeling as the Laocoon or Niobe in sculpture; and, indeed, the moral of a large proportion of them seems to be comprised in the chorus of Seneca's *Œdipus*—

> "Fatis agimur—cedite fatis:
> Non solicitæ possunt curæ
> Mutare rati stamina fusi."

M. Schlegel is of opinion, that had the Romans quitted the practice of Greek translation, and composed original tragedies, these would have been of a different cast and species from the Greek productions, and would have been chiefly expressive of profound religious sentiments. —"La tragedie Grecque avoit montré l'homme libre, combattant contre la destinée; la tragedie Romaine eut presenté a nos regards l'homme soumis a la Divinité, et subjugué jusques dans ses penchans les plus intimes, par cette puissance infinie qui sanctifie les ames, qui les enchaine de ses liens, et qui brille de toutes parts, a travers le voile de l'univers[354]." His reasons for supposing that this difference would have existed, are founded on the difference in the mythological systems of the two nations.—"L'ancienne croyance des Romains et les usages qui s'y rapportoient, renfermoient un sens moral, serieux, philosophique, divinatoire et symbolique, qui
[pg 221] n'existoit pas dans la religion des Grecs." There can be no doubt, that the Romans were in public life, during the early periods or their history, a devotedly religious people. Nothing of moment was undertaken without being assured that the gods approved, and would favour the enterprise. The utmost order was observed in every step of religious performance. We see a consul leaving his army, on suspicion of some irregularity, to hold new auspices—an army inspired with sacred confidence and ardour, after appeasing the wrath of the gods, by expiatory lustrations—and a conqueror dedicating at his triumph the temple vowed in the moment of danger. But notwithstanding all this, it so happens, that a spirit of free-thinking is one of the most striking characteristics of the oldest class of Latin poets, particularly the tragedians, and in the fragments of those very plays which were founded on Roman subjects, there is everywhere expressed a bitter contempt for augury, and for the *sens divinatoire et symbolique*, which they evidently considered as quackery: and the dramatists do not seem to have much scrupled to declare that it was so, or the people to testify approbation of such sentiments. Even the almost impious lines of Ennius, that the gods take no concern in the affairs of mortals, were received, as we learn from Cicero, with vast applause.—"Noster Ennius, qui magno plausu loquitur, assentiente populo—Ego Deûm genus[355]," &c. It is probable, however, that a tragedy purely Roman would have been written in a different spirit from a Greek drama, because the manners of the two people had little resemblance, and because the Roman passion for freedom, detestation of tyranny, and feelings of patriotism, had strong shades of distinction from those of Greece. The self-devotion of the Decii and Curtius, was of a fiercer description than that of Leonidas. It was the headlong contempt, rather than the resolute sacrifice, of existence.

It was probably, too, from a slavish imitation of the Greek dramatists, that the Latin tragedies acquired what is considered one of their chief faults—the introduction of aphorisms and moral sentences, which were not confined to the chorus, the proper receptacle for them, (it being the peculiar office and character of the chorus to moralize,) but were spread over the whole drama in such a manner, that the characters appeared to be *vivendi preceptores* rather than *rei actores*. Quintilian characterizes Attius and Pacuvius as chiefly remarkable for this practice.—"Tragœdiæ scriptores Attius et Pacuvius, clarissimi gravitate sententiarum." A question on this point is
[pg 222] started by Hurd,—That since the Greek tragedians moralized so much, how shall we defend Sophocles, and particularly Euripides, if we condemn Attius and Seneca? Brumoy's solution is, that the moral and political aphorisms of the Greek stage generally contained some apt and interesting allusion to the state of public affairs, easily caught by a quick intelligent audience, and not a dry affected moral without farther meaning, like most of the Latin maxims. In the age, too, of the Greek tragedians, there was a prevailing fondness for moral wisdom; and schools of philosophy were resorted to for recreation as well as for instruction. Moral aphorisms, therefore, were not inconsistent with the ordinary flow of conversation in those times, and would be relished by such as indulged in philosophical conferences, whereas such speculations were not introduced till late in Rome, and were never very generally in vogue.

On the whole, it may be admitted that the bold and animated genius of Rome was well suited to tragedy, and that in force of colouring and tragic elevation the Latin poets presented not a feeble image of their great originals; but unfortunately their judgment was uninformed, and they were too easily satisfied with their own productions. Strength and fire were all at which they aimed, and with this praise they remained contented. They were careless with regard to the regularity or harmony of versification. The discipline of correction, the curious polishing of art, which had given such lustre to the Greek tragedies, they could not bestow, or held the emendation requisite for dramatic perfection as disgraceful to the high spirit and energy of Roman genius[356]:

> "Turpem putat inscriptis metuitque lituram[357]."

To originality or invention in their subjects, they hardly ever presumed to aspire, and were

satisfied with gathering what they found already produced by another soil in full and ripened maturity.

It may perhaps appear strange that the Romans possessed so little original talents for tragedy, and indeed for the drama in general; but the genius of neighbouring nations, who had equal success in other sorts of poetry, has often been very different in this department of literature. The Spaniards could boast of Lopez de Vega, Cervantes, and Calderon, at a time when the Portuguese had no drama, and were contented with the exhibitions of strolling players from
[pg 223] Castile. Scotland had scarcely produced a single play of merit in the brightest age of the dramatic glory of England—the age of Shakspeare, Massinger, and Jonson. While France was delighted with the productions of Racine, Corneille, and Moliere, the modern Italians, as if their ancestors' poverty of dramatic genius still adhered to them, though so rich and abundant in every other department of literature, scarcely possessed a tolerable play of their own invention, and till the time of Goldoni were amused only with the most slavish imitations of the Latin comedies, the buffooneries of harlequin, or tragedies of accumulated and unmitigated horrors, which excite neither the interest of terror nor of pity.

For all this it may not be easy completely to account; but various causes may be assigned for the want of originality in Roman tragedy, and indeed in the whole Roman drama. The nation was deficient in that milder humanity of which there are so many beautiful instances in Grecian history. From the austere patriotism of Brutus sacrificing every personal feeling to the love of country,—from the frugality of Cincinnatus, and parsimony of the Censor, it fell with frightful rapidity into a state of luxury and corruption without example. Even during the short period which might be called the age of refinement, it wanted a poetical public. To judge by the early part of their history, one would suppose that the Romans were not deficient in that species of sensibility which fits for due sympathy in theatrical incidents. Most of their great revolutions were occasioned by events acting strongly and suddenly on their feelings. The hard fate of Lucretia, Virginia, and the youth Publilius, freed them from the tyranny of their kings, decemvirs, and patrician creditors. On the whole, however, they were an austere, stately, and formal people; their whole mode of life tended to harden the heart and feelings, and there was a rigid uniformity in their early manners, ill adapted to the free workings of the passions. External indications of tenderness were repressed as unbecoming of men whose souls were fixed on the attainment of the most lofty objects. Pity was never to be felt by a Roman, but when it came in the shape of clemency towards a vanquished foe, and tears were never to dim the eyes of those whose chief pride consisted in acting with energy and enduring with firmness. This self-command, which their principles required of them,—this control of every manifestation of suffering in themselves, and contempt for the expression of it in others, tended to exclude tragedy almost entirely from the range of their literature.

Any softer emotions, too, which the Roman people may have once experienced—any sentiments
[pg 224] capable of being awakened to tragic pathos, became gradually blunted by the manner in which they were exercised. They had, by degrees, been accustomed to take a barbarous delight in the most wanton displays of human violence, and brutal cruelty. Lions and elephants tore each other in pieces before their eyes; and they beheld, with emotions only of delight, crowds of hireling gladiators wasting their energy, valour, and life, on the guilty *arena* of a Circus. Gladiatorial combats were first exhibited by Decius and Marcus Brutus, at the funeral of their father, about the commencement of the Punic wars. The number of such entertainments increased with the luxury of the times; and those who courted popular favour found no readier way to gain it than by magnificence and novelty in this species of expense. Cæsar exhibited three hundred pairs of gladiators; Pompey presented to the multitude six hundred lions, to be torn in pieces in the Circus, besides harnessed bears and dancing elephants; and some other candidate for popular favour, introduced the yet more refined barbarity of combats between men and wild animals. These were the darling amusements of all, and chief occupations of many Romans; and those who could take pleasure in such spectacles, must have lost all that tenderness of inward feeling, and all that exquisite sympathy for suffering, without which none can perceive the force and beauty of a tragic drama. The extension, too, of the military power, and the increasing wealth and splendour of the Roman republic, accustomed its citizens to triumphal and gaudy processions. This led to a taste for what, in modern times, has been called *Spectacle*; and, instead of melting with tenderness at the woes of Andromache, the people demanded on the stage such exhibitions as presented them with an image of their favourite pastimes:—

> "Quatuor aut plures aulæa premuntur in horas,
> Dum fugiunt equitum turmæ, peditumque catervæ:
> Mox trahitur manibus regum fortuna retortis;
> Esseda festinant, pilenta, petorrita, naves:
> Captivum portatur ebur, captiva Corinthus[358]."

This sort of show was not confined to the afterpiece or entertainment, but was introduced in the finest tragedies, which were represented with such pomp and ostentation as to destroy all the grace of the performance. A thousand mules pranced about the stage in the tragedy of
[pg 225] *Clytemnestra*; and whole regiments, accoutred in foreign armour, were marshalled in that of the *Trojan Horse*[359]. This taste, so fatal to the genuine excellence of tragedy or comedy, was fostered and encouraged by the Ædiles, who had the charge of the public Shows, and, among others, of the exhibitions at the theatre. The ædileship was considered as one of the steps to the higher honours of the state; and those who held it could not resort to surer means of conciliating the

favour of their fellow-citizens, or purchasing their future suffrages, than by sparing no expense in the pageantry of theatrical amusements.

The language, also, of the Romans, however excellent in other respects, was at least in comparison with Greek, but ill suited to the expression of earnest and vivid emotion. It required an artful and elaborate collocation of words, and its construction is more forced and artificial than that of most other tongues. Hence passion always seemed to speak the language with effort; the idiom would not yield to the rapid transitions and imperfect phrases of impassioned dialogue.

Little attention, besides, was paid to critical learning, and the cultivation of correct composition. The Latin muse had been nurtured amid the festivities of rural superstition; and the impure mixture of licentious jollity had so corrupted her nature, that it long partook of her rustic origin. Even so late as the time of Horace, the tragic drama continued to be unsuccessful, in consequence of the illiberal education of the Roman youth; who, while the Greeks were taught to open all the mind to glory, were so cramped in their genius by the love of gain, and by the early infusion of sordid principles, that they were unable to project a great design, or conduct it to perfection. The consequence was, that the "*ærugo et cura peculi*" had so completely infected the Roman dramatists, that lucre was the sole object of their pains. Hence, provided they could catch popular applause, and secure a high price from the magistrates who superintended theatrical exhibitions, they felt indifferent to every nobler view, and more worthy purpose:—

> "Gestit enim nummum in loculos demittere; post hoc
> Securus, cadat, an recto stet fabula tale[360]."

But, above all, the low estimation in which the art of poetry was held, must be regarded as a cause of its little progress during the periods of the republic: "Sero igitur," says Cicero, "a
[pg 226] nostris, poetæ vel cogniti vel recepti. Quo minus igitur honoris erat poetis, eo minora studia fuerunt[361]." The earliest poets of Rome had not the encouragement of that court favour which was extended to Chaucer in England, to Marot and Ronsard in France, and to Dante by the petty princes of Italy. From Livius Andronicus to Terence, poetry was cultivated only by foreigners and freedmen. Scipio and Lælius, indeed, are said to have written some scenes in the plays of Terence; but they did not choose that anything of this sort should pass under their names. The stern republicans seem to have considered poetry as an art which captives and slaves might cultivate, for the amusement of their conquerors, or masters, but which it would be unsuitable for a grave and lofty patrician to practice. I suspect, the Romans regarded a poet as a tumbler or rope-dancer, with whose feats we are entertained, but whom we would not wish to imitate.

The drama in Rome did not establish itself systematically, and by degrees, as it did in Greece. Plautus wrote for the stage during the time of Livius Andronicus, and Terence was nearly contemporary with Pacuvius and Attius; so that everything serious and comic, good and bad, came at once, and if it was Grecian, found a welcome reception among the Romans. On this account every species of dramatic amusement was indiscriminately adopted at the theatre, and that which was most absurd was often most admired. The Greek drama acquired a splendid degree of perfection by a close imitation of nature; but the Romans never attained such perfection, because, however exquisite their models, they did not copy directly from nature, but from its representative and image.

Had the Romans, indeed, possessed a literature of their own, when they first grew familiar with the works of the Greek poets, their native productions would no doubt have been improved by the study and imitation of the masterpieces of these more accomplished foreigners; yet they would still have preserved something of a national character. But, unfortunately, when the Romans first became acquainted with the writings of the Greeks, they had not even sown the seeds of learning, so that they remained satisfied with the full-ripened produce imported from abroad. Several critics have indeed remarked in all the compositions of the Romans, and particularly in their tragedies, a peculiar severity and loftiness of thought; but they were all formed so entirely on a Greek model, that their early poetry must be regarded rather as the production of art than
[pg 227] genius, and as a spark struck by contact and attrition, rather than a flame spontaneously kindled at the altar of the Muses.

In addition to all this, the Latin poet had no encouragement to invent. He was not required to look abroad into nature, or strike out a path for himself. So far from this being demanded, Greek subjects were evidently preferred by the public—

> "Omnes res gestas Athenis esse autumant,
> Quo vobis illud Græcum videatur magis[362]."

All the works, then, which have been hitherto mentioned, and which, with exception of the *Annals* of Ennius, are entirely dramatic, belong strictly to what may be called the Greek school of composition, and are unquestionably the least original class of productions in the Latin, or perhaps any other language. But however little the early dramatists of Rome may have to boast of originality or invention, they are amply entitled to claim an unborrowed praise for the genuine purity of their native style and language.

The style and language of the dramatic writers of the period, on which we are now engaged, seem to have been much relished by a numerous class of readers, from the age of Augustus to that of the Antonines, and to have been equally abhorred by the poets of that time. We have

already seen Horace's indignation against those who admired the *Carmen Saliare*, or the poems of Livius, and which appears the bolder and more surprising, as Augustus himself was not altogether exempt from this predilection[363]; and we have also seen the satire of Persius against his age, for being still delighted with the fustian tragedies of Attius and the rugged style of Pacuvius—

"Est nunc Brisei quem venosus liber Atti,
Sunt quos Pacuviusque et verrucosa moretur
Antiope ærumnis cor luctificabile fulta."

In like manner Martial, in his Epigrams, mimicking the obsolete phrases of the ancient dramatists —

"Attonitusque legis *terräi frugiferäi*,
Attius et quicquid Pacuviusque vomunt."

[pg 228] Such sentiments, however, as is evident from Horace's Epistle to Augustus, proceeded in a great measure from the modern poets being provoked at an admiration, which they thought did not originate in a real sense of the merit of these old writers, but in an envious wish to depreciate, by odious comparison, the productions of the day—

"Jam Saliare Numæ carmen qui laudat, et illud
Quod mecum ignorat, solus vult scire videri;
Ingentis non ille favet, plauditque sepultis,
Nostra sed impugnat—nos, nostraque lividus odit."

But although a great proportion of the public may, with malicious designs, have heaped extravagant commendations on the style of the ancient tragedians, there can be no doubt that it is full of vigour and richness; and if inferior to the exquisite refinement of the Augustan age, it was certainly much to be preferred to the obscurity of Persius, or the conceits of Martial. "A very imperfect notion," says Wakefield, in one of his letters to Fox, "is entertained in general of the copiousness of the Latin language, by those who confine themselves to what are styled the Augustan writers. The old comedians and tragedians, with Ennius and Lucilius, were the great repositories of learned and vigorous expression. I have ever regarded the loss of the old Roman poets, particularly Ennius and Lucilius, from the light they would have thrown on the formations of the Latin language, and its derivation from the Æolian Greek, as the severest calamity ever sustained by philological learning[364]." Sometimes, indeed, their words are uncouth, particularly their compound terms and epithets, in the formation of which they are not nearly so happy as the Greeks. Livius Andronicus uses *Odorisequos canes*—Pacuvius employs *Repandirostrum* and *Incurvicervicum*. Such terms always appear incongruous and disjointed, and not knit together so happily as *Cyclops*, and other similar words of the Greeks.

The different classes into which the regular drama of this period may be reduced, is a subject involved in great contradiction and uncertainty, and has been much agitated in consequence of Horace's celebrated line—

"Vel qui *Prætextas* vel qui docuere *Togatas*[365]."

On the whole, it seems pretty evident, that the *regular* drama was divided into tragedy and comedy. A tragedy on a Greek subject, and in which Greek manners were preserved, as the
[pg 229] Hecuba, Dulorestes, &c. was simply styled *Tragœdia*, or sometimes *Tragœdia Palliata*. Those tragedies again, in which Roman characters were introduced, as the Decius and Brutus of Attius, were called *Prætextatæ*, because the Prætexta was the habit worn by Roman kings and consuls. The comedy which adopted Greek subjects and characters, like those of Terence, was termed *Comœdia*, or *Comœdia Palliata*; and that which was clothed in Roman habits and customs, was called *Togata*[366]. Afranius was the most celebrated writer of this last class of dramas, which were probably Greek pieces accommodated to Roman manners, since Afranius lived at a period when Roman literature was almost entirely imitative. It is difficult, no doubt, to see how an Athenian comedy could be bent to local usages foreign to its spirit and genius; but the Latin writers were not probably very nice about the adjustment; and the *Comœdia Togata* is so slightly mentioned by ancient writers, that we can hardly suppose that it comprehended a great class of national compositions. The *Tabernaria* was a comedy of a lower order than the *Comœdia Togata*: It represented such manners as were likely to be met with among the dregs of the Plebeians; and was so called from Taberna, as its scene was usually laid in shops or taverns. These, I think, are the usual divisions of the regular Roman drama; but critics and commentators have sometimes applied the term *Togata* to all plays, whether tragedies or comedies, in which Roman characters were represented, and *Palliata* to every drama of Greek origin.

There was, however, a species of irregular dramas, for which the Romans were not indebted to the Greeks, and which was peculiar to themselves, called *Fabulæ Atellanæ*. These entertainments were so denominated from Atella, a considerable town of the Oscans, now St Arpino, lying about two miles south from Aversa, between Capua and Naples,—the place now named Atella being at a little distance.

When Livius Andronicus had succeeded in establishing at Rome a regular theatre, which was formed on the Greek model, and was supported by professional writers, and professional actors,

the free Roman youth, who were still willing, amid their foreign refinements, occasionally to revive the recollection of the old popular pastimes of their Italian ancestry, continued to amuse themselves with the satiric pieces introduced by the *Histrions* of Etruria, and with the Atellane
[pg 230] Fables which Oscan performers had first made known at Rome[367]. The actors of the regular drama were not permitted to appear in such representations; and the Roman youths, to whom the privilege was reserved, were not, as other actors, removed from their tribe, or rendered incapable of military service[368]; nor could they be called on like them to unmask in presence of the spectators[369]. It has been conjectured, that the popularity of these spectacles, and the privileges reserved to those who appeared in them, were granted in consequence of their pleasantries being so tempered by the ancient Italian gravity, that there was no admixture of obscenity or indecorum, and hence no stain of dishonour was supposed to be inflicted on the performers[370].

The Atellane Fables consisted of detached scenes following each other, without much dramatic connection, but replete with jocularity and buffoonery. They were written in the Oscan dialect, in the same way as the Venetian or Neapolitan jargons are frequently employed in the Italian comedies; and they differed from the Greek satiric drama in this, that the characters of the latter were Satyrs, while those of the Atellane fables were Oscan[371]. One of these was called Maccus, a grotesque and fantastic personage, with an immense head, long nose, and hump back, who corresponded in some measure to the clown or fool of modern pantomime, and whose appellation of Maccus has been interpreted by Lipsius as *Bardus*, *fatuus*, *stolidus*[372]. In its rude but genuine form this species of entertainment was in great vogue and constant use at Rome. It does not appear that the Atellane fables were originally written out, or that the actors had certain parts prescribed to them. The general subject was probably agreed on, but the performers themselves filled up the scenes from their own art or invention[373]. As the Roman language improved, and the provincial tongues of ancient Italy became less known, the Oscan dialect was gradually abandoned. Quintus Novius, who lived in the beginning of the seventh century of Rome, and whom Macrobius mentions as one of the most approved writers of Atellane Fables, was the
[pg 231] author who chiefly contributed to this innovation. He is cited as the author of the *Virgo Prægnans*, *Dotata*, *Gallinaria*, *Gemini*, and various others.

At length, in the time of Sylla, Lucius Pomponius produced Atellane Fables, which were written without any intermixture of the Oscan dialect, being entirely in the Latin language; and he at the same time refined their ancient buffoonery so much, by giving them a more rational cast, that he is called by Velleius Paterculus the inventor of this species of drama, and is characterized by that author as “sensibus celebrem, verbis rudem[374].” Pomponius was remarkable for his accurate observation of manners, and his genius has been highly extolled by Cicero and Seneca. The names of sixty-three of his pieces have been cited by grammarians, and from all these fragments are still extant. From some of them, however, not more than a line has been preserved, and from none of them more than a dozen. It would appear that the Oscan character of Maccus was still retained in many fables of Pomponius, as there is one entitled *Maccus*, and others *Macci Gemini*, *Maccus Miles*, *Maccus Sequestris*, in the same manner as we say Harlequin footman, &c. Pappo, or Pappus, seems also to have been a character introduced along with Maccus, and, I should think, corresponded to the Pantaloon of modern pantomime. Among the names of the Atellanes of Pomponius we find *Pappus Agricola*, and among those of Novius, *Pappus Præteritus*. This character, however, appears rather to have been of Greek than of Oscan origin; and was probably derived from Παππος, the Silenus or old man of the Greek dramatic satire.

The improvements of Pomponius were so well received at Rome, that he was imitated by Mummius, and by Sylla himself, who, we are told by Athenæus, wrote several Atellane Fables in his native language[375]. In this new form introduced by Pomponius the Atellane dramas continued to enjoy great popularity in Rome, till they were in some measure superseded by the Mimes of Laberius and Publius Syrus.

Along with the Atellane Fables, the Roman youth were in the practice of acting short pieces called *Exodia*, which were interludes, or after-pieces, of a yet more loose, detached, and farcical description, than the Atellanes, being a continuation of the ancient performances originally introduced by the Histrions of Etruria[376]. In these Exodia the actors usually wore the same masks
[pg 232] and habits as in the Atellanes and tragedies[377], and represented the same characters in a ludicrous point of view:—

> “Urbicus Exodio risum movet Atellanæ
> Gestibus Autonoes. Hunc diligit Ælia pauper[378].”

Joseph Scaliger, in his Commentary on Manilius, gives his opinion, that the *Exodia* were performed at the end of the principal piece, like our farces, and were so called as being the issue of the entertainment, which is also asserted by a scholiast on Juvenal[379]. But the elder Scaliger and Salmasius thought that the *exodium* was a sort of interlude, and had not necessarily any connection with the principal representation. The *Exodia* continued to be performed with much license in the times of Tiberius and Nero; and when the serious spirit of freedom had vanished from the empire, they often contained jocular but direct allusions to the crimes of the portentous monsters by whom it was scourged and afflicted.

It has been much disputed among modern critics, whether the

of the Romans was derived from the Greeks, or was of their own invention. The former opinion has been maintained by the elder Scaliger[380], Heinsius[381], Vulpius[382], and, among the most recent German critics, by Blankenburg[383], Conz, and Flogel[384]; the latter theory, which seems to have been that of the Romans themselves, particularly of Horace and Quintilian[385], has been supported by Diomedes[386], Joseph Scaliger, Casaubon[387], Spanheim[388], Rigaltius[389], Dacier[390], and Dryden, and by Koenig[391], and Manso, among the Germans. Those who suppose that satire descended directly from the Greeks to the Romans, derive the word from *Satyrus*, the well-known mythological compound of a man and goat. Casaubon, on the other hand, and most of those who have followed him, deduce it from the adjective *Satura*, a Sabine word, originally signifying a
[pg 233] medley, and, afterwards,—full or abundant. To this word the substantive *Lanx* was understood, which meant the platter or charger whereon the first fruits of the earth were offered to Bacchus at his festivals,—

> "Ergo rite suum Baccho dicemus honorem
> Carminibus patriis, lancesque et liba feremus[392]."

The term *Satura* thus came to be applied to a species of composition, originally written in various sorts of verse, and comprehending a *farrago* of all subjects,—

> "Quicquid agunt homines, votum, timor, ira, voluptas,
> Gaudia, discursus[393]," &c.

In the same way, laws were called *Leges Saturæ*, when they consisted of several heads and titles: and Verrius Flaccus calls a dish, which I suppose was a sort of *olla podrida*—Satura:—"Satura cibi genus ex variis rebus conditum." Dacier, however, though he agrees with Casaubon as to the Latin origin of satire, derives the term from Saturn; as he believes that it was at festivals in honour of that ancient god of Italy that those rustic impromptus, which gave rise to satire, were first recited.

Flogel, in his German *History of Comic Literature*, attempts to show, at considerable length, that Casaubon has attributed too much to the derivation of the word satire; since, though the term may be of Latin origin, it does not follow that the thing was unknown to the Greeks,—and that he also relies too much on the argument, that the satiric plays of the Greeks were quite different from the satire of the Romans, which may be true; while, at the same time, there are other sorts of Greek compositions, as the lyric satires of Archilochus and the *Silli*, which have a much nearer resemblance to the Latin didactic satire than any satirical drama.

In fact, the whole question seems to depend on what constitutes a sufficient alteration or variety from former compositions, to give a claim to invention. Now it certainly cannot be pretended, so far as we know, that *any* satiric productions of the Greeks had much resemblance to those of the Romans. The Greek satires, which are improperly so termed, were divided into what were called tragic and comic. The former were dramatic compositions, which had their commencement, like
[pg 234] the regular tragedy, in rustic festivals to the honour of Bacchus; and in which, characters representing Satyrs, the supposed companions of that god, were introduced, imitating the coarse songs and fantastic dances of rural deities. In their rude origin, it is probable that only one actor, equipped as a Satyr, danced or sung. Soon, however, a chorus appeared, consisting of the bearded and beardless Satyrs, Silenus, and Pappo Silenus; and Histrions, representing heroic characters, were afterwards introduced. The satiric drama began to flourish when the regular tragedy had become too refined to admit of a chorus, or accompaniment of Satyrs, but while these were still remembered with a sort of fondness, which rendered it natural to recur to the most ancient shape of the drama. In this state of the progress of the Greek stage, the satire was performed separately from the tragedy; and out of respect to the original form of tragedy, was often exhibited as a continuation or parody of the tragic *trilogy*, or three serious plays,—thus completing what was called the *tetralogia*. The scene of these satires was laid in the country, amid woods, caves, and mountains, or other such places as Satyrs were supposed to inhabit; and the subjects chosen were those in which Satyrs might naturally be feigned to have had a share or interest. High mythological stories and fabulous heroes were introduced, as appears from the names preserved by Casaubon, who mentions the *Hercules* of Astydamas, the *Alcmæon* and *Vulcan* of Achæus,—each of which is denominated σατυρικος. These heroic characters, however, were generally parodied, and rendered fantastic, by the gross railleries of Silenus and the Fauns. The *Cyclops* of Euripides, which turns on the story of Ulysses in the cave of Polyphemus, is the only example entirely extant of this species of composition. Some fragments, however, remain of the *Lytiersa* of Sositheus, an author who flourished about the 130th Olympiad, which was subsequent to the introduction of the new Greek comedy. Lytiersa, who gives name to this dramatic satire, lived in Phrygia. He used to receive many guests, who flocked to his residence from all quarters. After entertaining them at sumptuous banquets, he compelled them to go out with him to his fields, to reap his crop or cut his hay; and when they had performed this labour, he mowed off their heads, with a scythe. The style of entertainment, it seems, did not prevent his house from being a place of fashionable resort. Hercules, however, put an end to this mode of wishing a good afternoon, by strangling the hospitable landlord, and throwing his body into the Mæander. It is evident, from the subject of this play, and of the *Cyclops*, that the tragic satires

[pg 235] were a sort of fee-fa-fum performance, like our after-pieces founded on the stories of *Blue Beard* and *Jack the Giant Killer*. They were generally short and simple in their plan: They contained no satire or ridicule against the fellow-citizens of the author, or any private individuals whatever; but there was a good deal of jeering by the characters at each other, and much buffoonery, revelling, and indecency, among the satiric persons of the chorus.

The Comic Satire began later than the Tragic, subsisted for some time along with it, and finally survived it. In Greece it was chiefly popular after the time of Alexander, and it also flourished in the court of the Egyptian Ptolemies. It was quite different from the Tragic Satire; the action being laid in cities, or at least not always amid rustic scenes. Private individuals were often satirized in it, and not unfrequently the tyrants or rulers of the state. When a mythic story was adopted, the affairs of domestic life were conjoined with the action, and it never was of the same enormous or bloody nature as the fables employed in the tragic satire, but such subjects were usually chosen as that of Amphitryon, Apollo feeding the flocks of Admetus, &c. Satyrs were not essential characters, and when they were introduced, private individuals were generally intended to be ridiculed, under the form of these rustic divinities. Gluttony, to judge from some fragments preserved by Athenæus, was one of the chief topics of banter and merriment. Timocles, who lived about the 114th Olympiad, was the chief author of comic satires. Lycophron, better known by his *Cassandra*, also wrote one called *Menedemus*, in which the founder of the Eretric school of philosophy was exposed to ridicule, under the character of Silenus, and his pupils under the masks of Satyrs.

Besides their dramatic satires, the Greeks had another species of poem called *Silli*, which were patched up like the *Cento Nuptialis* of Ausonius from the verses of serious writers, and by such means turned to a different sense from what their original author intended. Thus, in the *Silli* attributed to Timon, a sceptic philosopher and disciple of Pyrrho, who lived in the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus, the lines are copied from Homer and the tragic poets, but they are satirically applied to certain customs and systems of philosophy, which it was his object to ridicule. Some specimens of the *Silli* may be found in Diogenes Laertius; but the longest now extant is a passage preserved in Dio Chrysostom, exposing the mad attachment of the inhabitants of Alexandria to chariot races. To these *Silli* may be added the lyric or iambic satires directed against individuals, like those of Archilochus against Lycambes.

[pg 236] The Roman didactic satire had no great resemblance to any of these sorts of Greek satire. It referred, as every one knows, to the daily occurrences of life,—to the ordinary follies and vices of mankind. With the Greek tragic satire it had scarce any analogy whatever; for it was not in dialogue, and contained no allusion to the mythological Satyrs who formed the chorus of the Greek dramas. To the comic satire it had more affinity; and those writers who have maintained the Greek origin of Roman satire have done little justice to their argument by not attending to the distinction between these two sorts of dramatic satire, and treating the whole question as if it depended on the resemblance to the tragic satire. In the comic satire, as we have seen, Satyrs were not always nor necessarily introduced. The subject was taken from ordinary life; and domestic vice or absurdity was stigmatized and ridiculed, as it was in the Roman satire, particularly during its earliest ages. Still, however, there was no incident or plot evolved in a Roman satire; nor was it written in dialogue, except occasionally, for the sake of more lively sarcasm on life and manners.

But though the Roman satire took a different direction, it had something of the same origin as the satiric drama of the Greeks. As the Grecian holidays were celebrated with oblations to Bacchus and Ceres, to whose bounty they owed their wine and corn, in like manner the ancient Italians propitiated their agricultural or rustic deities with appropriate offerings,

> “Tellurem porco—Sylvanum lacte piabant[394];”

but as they knew nothing of the Silenus, or Satyrs of the Greeks, a chorus of peasants, fantastically disguised in masks cut out from the barks of trees, danced or sung to a certain kind of verse, which they called Saturnian:—

> “Nec non Ausonii, Trojâ gens missa, coloni
> Versibus incomtis ludunt, risuque soluto;
> Oraque corticibus sumunt horrenda cavatis:
> Et te, Bacche, vocant per carmina læta, tibique
> Oscilla ex altâ suspendunt mollia pinu[395].”

These festivals had usually the double purpose of worship and recreation; and accordingly the verses often digressed from the praises of Bacchus to mutual taunts and railleries, like those in Virgil’s third eclogue, on the various defects and vices of the speakers.

Such rude lines, originally sung or recited in the Tuscan and Latian villages, at nuptials or
[pg 237] religious festivals, were first introduced at Rome by *Histrions*, who, as already mentioned, were summoned from Etruria, in order to allay the pestilence which was depopulating the city. These Histrions being mounted on a stage, like our mountebanks, performed a sort of *ballet*, by dancing and gesticulating to the sound of musical instruments. The Roman youth thus learned to imitate their gestures and music, which they accompanied with railing verses delivered in extemporary dialogue.

The jeering, however, which had been at first confined to inoffensive raillery, at length exceeded the bounds of moderation, and the peace of private families was invaded by the unrestrained license of personal invective:—

"Libertasque recurrentes accepta per annos
Lusit amabiliter, donec jam sævus apertam
In rabiem cœpit verti jocus; et per honestas
Ire domos impune minax; doluere cruento
Dente lacessiti; fuit intactis quoque cura
Conditione super communi[396]." ——

This exposure of private individuals, which alarmed even those who had been spared, was restrained by a salutary law of the Decemvirs.—"Si quis occentassit malum carmen, sive condidisit, quod infamiam faxit flagitiumve alteri, fuste ferito."

Ennius, perceiving how much the Romans had been delighted with the rude satires poured forth in extemporary dialogue, thought it might be worth his pains to compose satires not to be recited but read. He preserved in them, however, the groundwork of the ancient pleasantry, and the venom of the ancient raillery, on individuals, as well as on general vices. His satires related to various subjects, and were written in different sorts of verses—hexameters being mingled with iambic and trochaic lines, as fancy dictated.

The satires of Ennius, which have already been more particularly mentioned, were imitated by Pacuvius, and from his time the word *satire* came to be applied at Rome only to poems containing either a playful or indignant censure on manners. This sort of composition was chiefly indebted for its improvement to

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LUCILIUS,

A Roman knight, who was born in the year 605, at Suessa, a town in the Auruncian territory. He was descended of a good family, and was the maternal granduncle of Pompey the Great. In early youth he served at the siege of Numantia, in the same camp with Marius and Jugurtha, under the younger Scipio Africanus[397], whose friendship and protection he had the good fortune to acquire. On his return to Rome from his Spanish campaign, he dwelt in a house which had been built at the public expense, and had been inhabited by Seleucus Philopater, Prince of Syria, whilst he resided in his youth as an hostage at Rome[398]. Lucilius continued to live on terms of the closest intimacy with the brave Scipio and wise Lælius,

"Quin ubi se a vulgo et scenâ in secreta remôrant
Virtus Scipiadæ et mitis sapientia Lælî,
Nugari cum illo et discincti ludere, donec
Decoqueretur olus, soliti[399]." ——

These powerful protectors enabled him to satirize the vicious without restraint or fear of punishment. In his writings he drew a genuine picture of himself, acknowledged his faults, made a frank confession of his inclinations, gave an account of his adventures, and, in short, exhibited a true and spirited representation of his whole life. Fresh from business or pleasure, he seized his pen while his fancy was yet warm, and his passions still awake,—while elated with success or depressed by disappointment. All these feelings, and the incidents which occasioned them, he faithfully related, and made his remarks on them with the utmost freedom:—

"Ille velut fidis arcana sodalibus olim
Credebat libris; neque si male gesserat, usquam
Decurrens aliô, neque si bene: quo fit ut omnis
Votivâ pateat veluti descripta tabellâ
Vita senis[400]." ——

Unfortunately, however, the writings of Lucilius are so mutilated, that few particulars of his life and manners can be gleaned from them. Little farther is known concerning him, than that he died at Naples, but at what age has been much disputed. Eusebius and most other writers have fixed
[pg 239] it at 45, which, as he was born in 605, would be in the 651st year of the city. But M. Dacier and Bayle[401] assert that he must have been much older, at the time of his death, as he speaks in his satires of the Licinian law against exorbitant expenditure at entertainments, which was not promulgated till 657, or 658.

Satire, more than any other species of poetry, is the offspring of the time in which it has its birth, and which furnishes it with the aliment whereon it feeds. The period at which Lucilius appeared was favourable to satiric composition. There was a struggle existing between the old and new manners, and the freedom of speaking and writing, though restrained, had not yet been totally checked by law. Lucilius lived amidst a people on whom luxury and corruption were advancing with fearful rapidity, but among whom some virtuous citizens were still anxious to stem the tide

which threatened to overwhelm their countrymen. The satires of Lucilius were adapted to please these staunch "*laudatores temporis acti*," who stood up for ancient manners and discipline. The freedom with which he attacked the vices of his contemporaries, without sparing individuals,—the strength of colouring with which his pictures were charged,—the weight and asperity of the reproaches with which he loaded those who had exposed themselves to his ridicule or indignation,—had nothing revolting in an age when no consideration compelled to those forbearances necessary under different forms of society or government[402]. By the time, too, in which Lucilius began to write, the Romans, though yet far from the polish of the Augustan age, had become familiar with the delicate and cutting irony of the Greek comedies of which the more ancient Roman satirists had no conception. Lucilius chiefly applied himself to the imitation of these dramatic productions, and caught, it is said, much of their fire and spirit:

"Eupolis, atque Cratinus, Aristophanesque, pöetæ,
Atque alii, quorum comœdia prisca virorum est,
Si quis erat dignus describi, quod malus, aut fur,
Quod mœchus foret, aut sicarius, aut alioqui
Famosus, multa cum libertate notabant.
Hinc omnis pendet Lucilius, hosce secutus,
Mutatis tantum pedibus numerisque[403]." ——

The Roman language, likewise, had grown more refined in the age of Lucilius, and was thus more
[pg 240] capable of receiving the Grecian beauties of style. Nor did Lucilius, like his predecessors, mix iambic with trochaic verses. Twenty books of his satires, from the commencement, were in hexameter verse, and the rest, with exception of the thirtieth, in iambics or trochaics. His object, too, seems to have been bolder and more extensive than that of his precursors, and was not so much to excite laughter or ridicule, as to correct and chastise vice. Lucilius thus bestowed on satiric composition such additional grace and regularity, that he is declared by Horace to have been the first among the Romans who wrote satire in verse:—

"Primus in hunc operis componere carmina morem."

But although Lucilius may have greatly improved this sort of writing, it does not follow that his satires are to be considered as altogether of a different species from those of Ennius—a light in which they have been regarded by Casaubon and Ruperti; "for," as Dryden has remarked, "it would thence follow, that the satires of Horace are wholly different from those of Lucilius, because Horace has no less surpassed Lucilius in the elegance of his writing, than Lucilius surpassed Ennius in the turn and ornament of his."

The satires of Lucilius extended to not fewer than thirty books; but whether they were so divided by the poet himself, or by some grammarian who lived shortly after him, seems uncertain: He was a voluminous author, and has been satirized by Horace for his hurried copiousness and facility:—

"Nam fuit hoc vitiosus: In horâ sæpe ducentos,
Ut magnum, versus dictabat, stans pede in uno:
Garrulus, atque piger scribendi ferre laborem;
Scribendi recte: nam ut multum, nil moror[404]."

Of the thirty books there are only fragments extant; but these are so numerous, that though they do not capacitate us to catch the full spirit of the poet, we perceive something of his manner. His merits, too, have been so much canvassed by ancient writers, who judged of them while his works were yet entire, that their discussions in some measure enable us to appreciate his poetical claims. It would appear that he had great vivacity and humour, uncommon command of language, intimate knowledge of life and manners, and considerable acquaintance with the Grecian masters. Virtue appeared in his draughts in native dignity, and he exhibited his distinguished friends, Scipio and Lælius, in the most amiable light. At the same time it was impossible to
[pg 241] portray anything more powerful than the sketches of his vicious characters. His rogue, glutton, and courtezan, are drawn in strong, not to say coarse colours. He had, however, much of the old Roman humour, that celebrated but undefined *urbanitas*, which indeed he possessed in so eminent a degree, that Pliny says it began with Lucilius in composition[405], while Cicero declares that he carried it to the highest perfection[406], and that it almost expired with him[407]. But the chief characteristic of Lucilius was his vehement and cutting satire. Macrobius calls him "Acer et violentus poeta[408];" and the well-known lines of Juvenal, who relates how he made the guilty tremble by his pen, as much as if he had pursued them sword in hand, have fixed his character as a determined and inexorable persecutor of vice. His Latin is admitted on all hands to have been sufficiently pure[409]; but his versification was rugged and prosaic. Horace, while he allows that he was more polished that his predecessors, calls his muse "pedestris," talks repeatedly of the looseness of his measure, "Incomposito pede currere versus," and compares his whole poetry to a muddy and troubled stream:—

"Cum flueret lutulentus erat quod tollere velles."

Quintilian does not entirely coincide with this opinion of Horace; for, while blaming those who considered him as the greatest of poets, which some persons still did in the age of Domitian, he says, "Ego quantum ab illis, tantum ab Horatio dissentio, qui Lucilium fluere lutulentum, et esse aliquid quod tollere possis, putat[410]." The author of the books *Rhetoricorum*, addressed to

Herennius, and which were at one time attributed to Cicero, mentions, as a singular awkwardness in the construction of his lines, the disjunction of words, which, according to proper and natural arrangement, ought to have been placed together, as—

"Has res ad te scriptas *Luci* misimus *Æli*."

[pg 242] Nay, what is still worse, it would appear from Ausonius, that he had sometimes barbarously separated the syllables of a word—

"Villa *Lucani*—mox potieris *aco*.
Rescisso discas componere nomine versum;
Lucilî vatis sic imitator eris[411]."

As to the learning of Lucilius, the opinions of antiquity were different; and even those of the same author appear somewhat contradictory on this point. Quintilian says, that there is "Eruditio in eo mira." Cicero, in his treatise *De Finibus*, calls his learning *mediocris*; though, afterwards, in the person of Crassus, in his treatise *De Oratore*, he twice terms him *Doctus*[412]. Dacier suspects that Quintilian was led to consider Lucilius as learned, from the pedantic intermixture of Greek words in his compositions—a practice which seems to have excited the applause of his contemporaries, and also of his numerous admirers in the Augustan age, for which they have been severely ridiculed by Horace, who always warmly opposed himself to the excessive partiality entertained for Lucilius during that golden period of literature—

"At magnum fecit, quod verbis Græca Latinis
Miscuit:—O seri studiorum!"

It is not unlikely that there may have been something of political spleen in the admiration expressed for Lucilius during the age of Augustus, and something of courtly complaisance in the attempts of Horace to counteract it. Augustus had extended the law of the 12 tables respecting libels; and the people, who found themselves thus abridged of the liberty of satirizing the Great by name, might not improbably seek to avenge themselves by an overstrained attachment to the works of a poet, who, living as they would insinuate, in better times, practised, without fear, what he enjoyed without restraint[413].

Some motive of this sort doubtless weighed with the Romans in the age of Augustus, since much of the satire of Lucilius must have been unintelligible, or at least uninteresting to them. Great part of his compositions appears to have been rather a series of libels than legitimate satire, being occupied with virulent attacks on contemporary citizens of Rome—

[pg 243] —— "Secuit Lucilius urbem,
Te Mute, te Lupe, et genuinum fregit in illos[414]."

Douza, who has collected and edited all that remains of the satires of Lucilius, mentions the names of not fewer than sixteen individuals, who are attacked by name in the course even of these fragments, among whom are Quintus Opimius, the conqueror of Liguria, Cæcilius Metellus, whose victories acquired him the sirname of Macedonianus, and Cornelius Lupus, at that time *Princeps Senatus*. Lucilius was equally severe on contemporary and preceding authors; Ennius, Pacuvius, and Attius, having been alternately satirized by him[415]. In all this he indulged with impunity[416]; but he did not escape so well from a player, whom he had ventured to censure, and who took his revenge by exposing Lucilius on the stage. The poet prosecuted the actor, and the cause was carried on with much warmth on both sides before the Prætor, who finally acquitted the player[417].

The confidence of Lucilius in his powerful patrons, Scipio and Lælius, inspired this freedom; and it appears, in fact, to have so completely relieved him from all fear or restraint, that he boldly exclaims—

—— "Cujus non audeo dicere nomen?
Quid refert dictis ignoscat Mutius, an non?"

It is chiefly to such support that the unbridled license of the old Roman satirists may be ascribed —

—— "Unde illa priorum
Scribendi quodcunque animo flagrante liberet
Simplicitas[418]." ——

The harsh and uncultivated spirit of the ancient Romans also naturally led to this species of severe and personal castigation; and it was not to be expected that in that age they should have drawn their pictures with the delicacy and generality which Horace has given to Offellus.

Lucilius, however, did not confine himself to invectives on vicious mortals. In the first book of his satires, he appears to have declared war on the false gods of Olympus, whose plurality he denied, and ridiculed the simplicity of the people, who bestowed on an infinity of gods the venerable
[pg 244] name of father, which should be reserved for one. Near the commencement of this book he represents an assembly of the gods deliberating on human affairs:

"Consilium summis hominum de rebus habebant."

And, in particular, discussing what punishment ought to be inflicted on Rutilius Lupus, a considerable man in the Roman state, but noted for his wickedness and impiety, and so powerful that it is declared—

"Si conjuret, populus vix totus satis est."

Jupiter expresses his regret that he had not been present at a former council of the gods, called to deliberate on this topic—

"Vellem concilio vestrûm, quod dicitis, olim,
Cælicolæ; vellem, inquam, adfuissem priore
Concilio." ——

Jupiter having concluded, the subject is taken up by another of the gods, who, as Lactantius informs us, was Neptune[419]; but being puzzled with its intricacy, this divinity declares it could not be explained, were Carneades himself (the most clear and eloquent of philosophers) to be sent up to them from Orcus:

"Nec si Carneadem ipsum ad nos Orcus remittat."

The only result of the solemn deliberations of this assembly is a decree, that each god should receive from mortals the title of father—

"Ut nemo sit nostrûm, quin pater optumus divûm;
Ut Neptunus pater, Liber, Saturnu' pater, Mars,
Janu' Quirinu' pater, nomen dicatur ad unum."

The third book contains an account of the inconveniences and amusements of a journey, performed by Lucilius, along the rich coast of Campania, to Capua and Naples, and thence all the way to Rhegium and the Straits of Messina. He appears particularly to have described a combat of gladiators, and the manifold distresses he experienced from the badness of the roads—

"Præterea omne iter hoc est labosum atque lutosum."

[pg 245] Horace, in the fifth satire of his first book, has, in imitation of Lucilius, comically described a journey from Rome to Brundusium, and like him has introduced a gladiatorial combat. The fourth satire of Lucilius stigmatizes the luxury and vices of the rich, and has been imitated by Persius in his third book. Aulus Gellius informs us, that in part of his fifth satire he exposed, with great wit and power of ridicule, those literary affectations of using such words in one sentence as terminate with a similar jingle, or consist of an equal number of syllables. He has shown how childish such affectations are, in that passage wherein he complains to a friend that he had neglected to visit him while sick. In the ninth satire he ridicules the blunders in orthography, committed by the transcribers of MSS., and gives rules for greater accuracy. Of the tenth book little remains; but it is said to have been the perusal of it which first inflamed Persius with the rage of writing satires. The eleventh seems to have consisted chiefly of personal invectives against Quintus Opimius, Lucius Cotta, and others of his contemporaries, whose vices, or rivalship with his patron Scipio, exposed them to his enmity and vengeance. The sixteenth was entitled *Collyra*, having been chiefly devoted to the celebration of the praises of Collyra, the poet's mistress[420]. Of many of the other books, as the 12th, 13th, 18th, 21st, and four following, so small fragments remain, that it is impossible to conjecture the subject; for although we may see the scope of insulated lines, their matter may have been some incidental illustration, and not the principal subject of the satire. Even in those books, of which there are a greater number of fragments extant, they are so disjoined that it is as difficult to put them legibly together as the scattered leaves of the Sibyl; and the labour of Douza, who has been the most successful in arranging the broken lines, so as to make a connected sense, is by many considered as but a conjectural and philological sport. Those few passages, however, which are in any degree entire, show great force of satire; as for example, the following account of the life led by the Romans:—

"Nunc vero a mane ad noctem, festo atque profesto,
Totus item pariterque dies, populusque patresque
Jactare indu foro se omnes, decedere nusquam,
Uni se atque eidem studio omnes dedere et arti;
Verba dare ut caute possint, pugnare dolose,
Blanditia certare, bonum simulare virum se,
Insidias facere, ut si hostes sint omnibus omnes."

[pg 246] The verses in which our poet bitterly ridicules the superstition of those who adored idols, and mistook them for true gods, are written in something of the same spirit—

"Terricolas Lamias, Fauni quas, Pompiliique
Instituere Numæ, tremit has, his omnia ponit:
Ut pueri infantes credunt signa omnia ahena
Vivere, et esse homines; et sic isti omnia ficta
Vera putant: credunt signis cor inesse ahenis—
Pergula pictorum, veri nihil, omnia ficta[421]."

On this passage Lactantius remarks, that such superstitious fools are much more absurd than the children to whom the satirist compares them, as the latter only mistake statues for men, the former for gods. There are two lines in the 26th book, which every nation should remember in the hour of disaster—

> “Ut populus Romanus victus vi, et superatus præliis
> Sæpe est multis; bello vero nunquam, in quo sunt omnia[422].”

But the most celebrated and longest passage we now have from Lucilius, is his definition of *Virtus*—

> “Virtus, Albine, est, pretium persolvere verum,
> Queis in versamur, queis vivimus rebus, potesse:
> Virtus est homini, scire id quod quæque habeat res;
> Virtus, scire homini rectum, utile, quid sit honestum,
> Quæ bona, quæ mala item, quid inutile, turpe, inhonestum;
> Virtus, quærendæ rei finem scire modumque:
> Virtus, divitiis precium persolvere posse:
> Virtus, id dare quod re ipsa debetur honori;
> Hostem esse atque inimicum hominum morumque malorum,
> Contra, defensorem hominum morumque bonorum,
> Magnificare hos, his bene velle, his vivere amicum:
> Commoda præterea patriæ sibi prima putare,
> Deinde parentûm, tertia jam postremaque nostra[423].”

[pg 247] Lactantius has cavilled at the different heads of this definition[424], and perhaps some of them are more applicable to what we call wisdom, than to our term virtue, which, as is well known, does not precisely correspond to the Latin *Virtus*.

If we possessed a larger portion of the writings of Lucilius, I have no doubt it would be found that subsequent Latin poets, particularly the satirists, have not only copied various passages, but adopted the plan and subjects of many of his satires. It has already been mentioned, that Horace’s journey to Brundusium is imitated from that of Lucilius to Capua. His severity recommended him to Persius and Juvenal, who both mention him with respect. Persius, indeed, professes to follow him, but Juvenal seems a closer imitator of his manner. The jingle in the two following lines, from an uncertain book of Lucilius—

> “Ut me scire volo mihi conscius sum, ne
> Damnum faciam. Scire hoc se nescit, nisi alios id scire scierit,”

seems to have suggested Persius’ line—

> “Scire tuum nihil, nisi te scire hoc sciat alter.”

The verses, “Cujus non audeo dicere nomen,” &c. quoted above, are copied by Juvenal in his first satire, but with evident allusion to the works of his predecessor. A line in the first book—

> “Quis leget hæc? mîn’ tu istud ais? nemo, Hercule, nemo,”

has been imitated by Persius in the very commencement of his satires—

> “O curas hominum! O quantum est in rebus inane!
> Quis leget hæc? mîn’ tu istud ais? nemo, Hercule, nemo.”

Virgil’s phrase, so often quoted, “Non omnia possumus omnes,” is in the fifth book of Lucilius—

> “Major erat natu; non omnia possumus omnes.”

[pg 248] Were the whole works of Lucilius extant, many more such imitations might be discovered and pointed out. It is not on this account, however, that their loss is chiefly to be deplored. Had they remained entire, they would have been highly serviceable to philological learning. They would have informed us also of many incidents of Roman history, and would have presented us with the most complete draught of ancient Roman manners, and genuine Roman originals, which were painted from life, and at length became the model of the inimitable satires of imperial Rome.

Besides satirizing the wicked, under which category he probably classed all his enemies, Lucilius also employed his pen in praise of the brave and virtuous. He wrote, as we learn from Horace, a panegyric on Scipio Africanus, but whether the elder or younger is not certain:—

> “Attamen et justum poteras et scribere fortem
> Scipiadam, ut sapiens Lucilius[425].”

Lucilius was also author of a comedy entitled *Nummularia*, of which only one line remains; but we are informed by Porphyrion, the scholiast on Horace, that the plot turned on Pythias, a female slave, tricking her master, Simo, out of a sum of money, with which to portion his daughter.

Lucilius was followed in his satiric career by Sævius Nicanor, the grammarian, who was the

freedman of one Marcius, as we learn from the only line of his poetry which is extant, and which has been preserved by Suetonius, or whoever was the author of the work *De Illustribus Grammaticis*:—

"Sævius Nicanor Marci libertus negabit."

Publius Terentius Varro, sirnamed Atacinus, from the place of his birth, also attempted the Lucilian satire, but with no great success as we learn from Horace:—

"Hoc erat, experto frustra Varrone Atacino."

He was more fortunate, it is said, in his geographical poems, and in that *De Bello Sequanico*[426].

We may range among the satires of this period, the *Diræ* of the grammarian, Valerius Cato, who, being despoiled of his patrimony, especially his favourite villa at Tusculum, during the civil wars of Marius and Sylla, in order to make way for the soldiery, avenged himself, by writing poetical
[pg 249] imprecations on his lost property. This poem is sometimes inscribed *Diræ in Battarum*, which is inaccurate, as it gives an idea that Battarus is the name of the person who had got possession of the villa, and on whom the imprecations were uttered. There is not, however, a word of execration against any of those who had obtained his lands, except in so far as he curses the lands themselves, praying that they may become barren—that they may be inundated with rain—blasted with pestiferous breezes, and, in short, laid waste by every species of agricultural calamity. Joseph Scaliger thinks that Battarus was a river, and Nic. Heinsius that it was a hill. It seems evident enough from the poem itself, that Battarus was some well known satiric or invective bard, whom the author invokes, in order to excite himself to reiterated imprecations[427]:—

"Rursus et hoc iterum repetamus, Battare, carmen."

The concluding part of the *Diræ*, as edited by Wernsdorff[428], is a lamentation for the loss of a mistress, called Lydia, of whom the unfortunate poet had likewise been deprived. This, however, has been regarded by others as a separate poem from the *Diræ*. Cato was also author of a poem called *Diana*, and a prose work entitled *Indignatio*, in which he related the history of his misfortunes. He lived to an advanced age, but was oppressed by extreme poverty, and afflicted with a painful disease, as seems to be implied in the lines of his friend Furius Bibaculus, preserved in the treatise *De Illustribus Grammaticis*:—

"Quem tres calculi, et selibra farris,
Racemi duo, tegula sub unâ,
Ad summam prope nutriunt senectam[429]."

The stream of Roman poetry appears to have suffered a temporary stagnation during the period that elapsed from the destruction of Carthage, which fell in 607, till the death of Sylla, in 674. Lucilius, with whose writings we have been engaged, was the only poet who flourished in this long interval. The satirical compositions which he introduced were not very generally nor successfully imitated. The race of dramatists had become almost extinct, and even the fondness
[pg 250] for regular comedy and tragedy had greatly diminished. This was a pause, (though for a shorter period,) like that which was made in modern Italy, from the death of Petrarch till the rise of its bright constellation of poets, at the end of the 15th century. But the taste for literature which had been excited, and the luminous events which occurred, prevented either nation from being again enveloped in darkness. The ancient Romans could not be electrified by the fall of Carthage as their descendants were by the capture of Constantinople. But even the total subjugation of Greece, and extended dominion in Asia, were slower, at least in their influence on the efforts of poetry, than might have been anticipated from what was experienced immediately after the conquest of Magna Græcia. Any retrograde movement, however, was prevented by the more close and frequent intercourse which was opened with Greece. There, Athens and Rhodes were the chief allies of the Roman republic. These states had renounced their freedom, for the security which flattery and subservience obtained for them; but while they ceased to be considerable in power, they still continued pre eminent in learning. A number of military officers and civil functionaries, whom their respective employments carried to Greece—a number of citizens, whom commercial speculations attracted to its towns, became acquainted with and cherished Grecian literature. That contempt which the ancient and severe republicans had affected for its charms, gave place to the warmest enthusiasm. The Roman youth were instructed by Greeks, or by Romans who had studied in Greece. A literary tour in that country was regarded as forming an essential part in the education of a young patrician. Rhodes, Mitylene, and Athens, were chiefly resorted to, as the purest fountains from which the inspiring draughts of literature could be imbibed. This constant intercourse led to a knowledge of the philosophy and finest classical productions of Greece. It was thus that Lucretius was enabled to embody in Roman verse the whole Epicurean system, and Catullus to imitate or translate the lighter amatory and epigrammatic compositions of the Greeks. Both these poets flourished during the period on which we are now entering, and which extended from the death of Sylla to the accession of Augustus. The former of them,

was the most remarkable of the Roman writers, as he united the precision of the philosopher to
[pg 251] the fire and fancy of the poet; and, while he seems to have had no perfect model among the Greeks, has left a production unrivalled, (perhaps not to be rivalled,) by any of the same kind in later ages.

Of the life of Lucretius very little is known: He lived at a period abounding with great political actors, and full of portentous events—a period when every bosom was agitated with terror or hope, and when it must have been the chief study of a prudent man, especially if a votary of philosophy and the Muses, to hide himself as much as possible amid the shades. The year of his birth is uncertain. According to the chronicle of Eusebius, he was born in 658, being thus nine years younger than Cicero, and two or three younger than Cæsar. To judge from his style, he might be supposed older than either: but this, as appears from the example of Sallust, is no certain test, as his archaisms may have arisen from the imitation of ancient writers; and we know that he was a fond admirer of Ennius.

A taste for Greek philosophy had been excited at Rome for a considerable time before this era, and Lucretius was sent, with other young Romans of rank, to study at Athens. The different schools of philosophy in that city seem, about this period, to have been frequented according as they received a temporary fashion from the comparative abilities of the professors who presided in them. Cicero, for example, who had attended the Epicurean school at Athens, and became himself an Academic, intrusted his son to the care of Cratippus, a peripatetic philosopher. After the death of its great founder, the school of Epicurus had for some time declined in Greece: but at the period when Lucretius was sent to Athens, it had again revived under the patronage of L. Memmius, whose son was a fellow-student of Lucretius; as were also Cicero, his brother Quintus, Cassius, and Pomponius Atticus. At the time when frequented by these illustrious youths, the Gardens of Epicurus were superintended by Zeno and Phædrus, both of whom, but particularly the latter, have been honoured with the panegyric of Cicero. “We formerly, when we were boys,” says he, in a letter to Caius Memmius, “knew him as a profound philosopher, and we still recollect him as a kind and worthy man, ever solicitous for our improvement[430].”

One of the dearest, perhaps the dearest friend of Lucretius, was this Memmius, who had been his school-fellow, and whom, it is supposed, he accompanied to Bithynia, when appointed to the government of that province[431]. The poem *De Rerum Natura*, if not undertaken at the request of
[pg 252] Memmius, was doubtless much encouraged by him; and Lucretius, in a dedication expressed in terms of manly and elegant courtesy, very different from the servile adulation of some of his great successors, tells him, that the much desired pleasure of his friendship, was what enabled him to endure any toil or vigils—

> “Sed tua me virtus tamen, et sperata voluptas
> Suavis amicitiæ, quemvis ecferre laborem
> Suadet, et inducit nocteis vigilare serenas.”

The life of the poet was short, but happily was sufficiently prolonged to enable him to complete his poem, though, perhaps, not to give some portions of it their last polish. According to Eusebius, he died in the 44th year of his age, by his own hands, in a paroxysm of insanity, produced by a philtre, which Lucilia, his wife or mistress, had given him, with no design of depriving him of life or reason, but to renew or increase his passion. Others suppose that his mental alienation proceeded from melancholy, on account of the calamities of his country, and the exile of Memmius,—circumstances which were calculated deeply to affect his mind[432]. There seems no reason to doubt the melancholy fact, that he perished by his own hand.

The poem of Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura*, which he composed during the lucid intervals of his malady, is, as the name imports, philosophic and didactic, in the strictest acceptation of these terms. Poetry, I think, may chiefly be considered as occupied in three ways.—1. As describing the passions of men, with the circumstances which give birth to them.—2. As painting images or scenery.—3. As communicating truth. Of these classes of poetry, the most interesting is the first, in which we follow the hero placed at short intervals in different situations, calculated to excite various sympathies in our heart, while our imagination is at the same time amused or astonished by the singularity of the incidents which such situations produce. Those poems, therefore, are the most attractive, in which, as in the *Odyssey* and *Orlando*, knights or warriors plough unknown seas, and wander in strange lands—where, at every new horizon which opens, we look for countries inhabited by giants, or monsters, or wizards of supernatural powers—where, whether sailing on the deep, or anchoring on the shore, the hero dreads—

> “Lest Gorgons, rising from infernal lakes,
> With horrors armed, and curls of hissing snakes,
> Should fix him, stiffened at the monstrous sight,
> A stony image in eternal night.”

[pg 253] These are the themes of surest and most powerful effect: It is by these that we are most truely moved; and it is the choice of such subjects, if ably conducted, which chiefly stamps the poet—

"Humanæ Dominum mentis, cordisque Tyrannum."

So strongly, indeed, and so universally, has this been felt, that in the second species of poetry, the *Descriptive*, our sympathy must be occasionally awakened by the actions or passions of human beings; and, to ensure success, the poet must describe the effects of the appearance of nature on our sensations. "In the poem of the *Shipwreck*," says Lord Byron, "is it the storm or the ship which most interests?—Both much, undoubtedly; but without the vessel, what should we care for the tempest[433]?" Virgil had early felt, that without Lycoris, the *gelidi fontes* and *mollia prata* would seem less refreshing and less smooth—he had found that the grass and the groves withered at the departure, but revived at the return of Phyllis. The most soothing and picturesque of the incidents of a woodland landscape,—the blue smoke curling upwards from a cottage concealed by the trees, derives half its softening charm, by reminding us—

"That in the same did wonne some living wight."

Of all the three species above enumerated, *Philosophical* poetry, which occupies the mind with minute portions of external nature, is the least attractive. Mankind will always prefer books which move to those which instruct—*ennui* being more burdensome than ignorance. In philosophic poetry, our imagination cannot be gratified by the desert isles, the boundless floods, or entangled forests, with all the marvels they conceal, which rise in such rapid and rich succession in the fascinating narrative of the sea tost Ulysses[434]; nor can we there have our curiosity roused, and our emotions excited, by such lines as those with which Ariosto awakens the attention of his readers—

"Non furo iti duo miglia, che sonare
Odon la selva, che gli cinge intorno,
Con tal rumor et strepito che pare
Che tremi la foresta d'ogni intorno."

[pg 254] Besides, as has been observed by Montesquieu, reason is sufficiently chained, though we fetter her not with rhyme; and, on the other hand, poetry loses much of its freedom and lightness, if clogged with the bonds of reason. The great object of poetry (according to a trite remark,) is to afford pleasure; but philosophic poetry affords less pleasure than epic, descriptive, or dramatic. The versifier of philosophic subjects is in danger of producing a work neither interesting enough for the admirers of sentiment and imagination, nor sufficiently profound for philosophers. He will sometimes soar into regions where many of his readers are unable to follow him, and, at other times, he will lose the suffrage of a few, by interweaving fictions amid the severe and simple truth.

It is the business of the philosopher to analyze the objects of nature. He must pay least attention to those which chiefly affect the sense and imagination, while he minutely considers others, which, though less striking, are more useful for classification, and the chief purposes he has in view. The poet, on the other hand, avoiding dry and abstract definitions, rather combines than analyzes, and dwells more on the sensible phænomena of nature, than her mysterious and scientific workings. Thus, what the botanist considers is the number of *stamina*, and their situation in a flower, while the Muse describes only its colours, and the influence of its odours—

"She loves the rose, by rivers loves to dream,
Nor heeds why blooms the rose, why flows the stream—
She loves its colours, though she may not know,
Why sun-born Iris paints the showery bow."

But though philosophic poetry be, of all others, the most unfavourable for the exertion of poetical genius, its degree of beauty and interest will, in a great measure, depend on what parts of his subject the poet selects, and on the extent and number of digressions of which it admits. It is evident, that the philosophic poet should pass over as lightly as may be, all dry and recondite doctrines, and enlarge on the topics most susceptible of poetical ornament. "Le Tableau de la Nature Physique," says Voltaire, "est lui seule d'une richesse, d'une varieté, d'une etendue à occuper des siécles d'étude; mais tous les details ne sont pas favorable à la poésie. On n' exige pas du poete les meditations du physicien et les calculs de l'astronomie: c'est à l'observateur à déterminer l'attraction et les mouvemens des corps celestes; c'est au poete à peindre leur balancement, leur harmonie, et leurs immuables révolutions. L'un distinguera les classes
[pg 255] nombreuses d'etres organisés qui peuplent les elémens divers; l'autre décririra d'un trait hardi, lumineux et rapide cette echelle immense et continue, ou les limites des regnes se confondent. Que le confident de la nature develope le prodige de la greffe des arbres—c'est assez pour Virgile de l'exprimer en deux beaux vers—

"Exiit ad cœlum ramis felicibus arbos,
Miraturque novas frondes et non sua poma[435]."

With regard, again, to digressions, Racine, (le Fils) in speaking of didactic poetry, says there are two sorts of episodes which may be introduced into it, and which he terms episodes of narrative and of style, (*De Recit et de Style*,) meaning by the former the recital of the adventures of individuals, and by the latter, general reflections suggested by the subject[436]. Without some embellishment of this description, most philosophic poems will correspond to Quintilian's account of the poem of Aratus on astronomy, "Nulla varietas, nullus affectus, nulla persona, nulla

cujusquam, est oratio[437].” From what has already been said concerning the extreme interest excited by the introduction of sentient beings, with all their perils around, and all their passions within them, it follows, that where the subject admits, episodes of the first class will best serve the purposes of poetry, and if the poet choose such dry and abstruse topics as cosmogony, or the generation of the world, he ought to follow the example of Silenus[438], by embellishing his subject with tales of Hylas, and Philomela, and Scylla, and the gardens of the Hesperides—the themes which induce us to listen to the lay of the poet—

> “Cogere donec oves stabulis, numerumque referre,
> Jussit, et invito processit Vesper Olympo.”

It is, however, with the second class of episodes—with declamations against luxury and vice—reflections on the beauty of virtue—and the delights of rural retirement, that Lucretius hath chiefly gemmed his verses.

The poem of Lucretius contains a full exposition of the theological, physical, and moral system of Epicurus. It has been remarked by an able writer, “that all the religious systems of the ancient Pagan world were naturally perishable, from the quantity of false opinions, and vicious habits,
[pg 256] and ceremonies that were attached to them.” He observes even of the barbarous Anglo Saxons, that, “as the nation advanced in its active intellect, it began to be dissatisfied with its mythology. Many indications exist of this spreading alienation, which prepared the northern mind for the reception of the nobler truths of Christianity[439].” A secret incredulity of this sort seems to have been long nourished in Greece, and appears to have been imported into Rome with its philosophy and literature. The more pure and simple religion of early Rome was quickly corrupted, and the multitude of ideal and heterogeneous beings which superstition introduced into the Roman worship led to its total rejection[440]. This infidelity is very obvious in the writings of Ennius, who translated Euhemerus’ work on the Deification of Human Spirits, while Plautus dramatized the vices of the father of the gods and tutelary deity of Rome. The doctrine of materialism was introduced at Rome during the age of Scipio and Lælius[441]; and perhaps no stronger proof of its rapid progress and prevalence can be given, than that Cæsar, though a priest, and ultimately Pontifex Maximus, boldly proclaimed in the senate, that death is the end of all things, and that beyond it there is neither hope nor joy. This state of the public mind was calculated to give a fashion to the system of Epicurus[442]. According to this distinguished philosopher, the chief good of man is pleasure, of which the elements consist, in having a body free from pain, and a mind tranquil and exempt from perturbation. Of this tranquility there are, according to Epicurus, as expounded by Lucretius, two chief enemies, superstition, or slavish fear of the gods, and the dread of death[443]. In order to oppose these two foes to happiness, he endeavours, in the first
[pg 257] place, to shew that the world was formed by a fortuitous concourse of atoms, and that the gods, who, according to the popular theology, were constantly interposing, take no concern whatever in human affairs. We do injustice to Epicurus when we estimate his tenets by the refined and exalted ideas of a philosophy purified by faith, without considering the superstitious and polluted notions prevalent in his time. “The idea of Epicurus,” (as is observed by Dr Drake,) “that it is the nature of gods to enjoy an immortality in the bosom of perpetual peace, infinitely remote from all relation to this globe, free from care, from sorrow, and from pain, supremely happy in themselves, and neither rejoicing in the pleasures, nor concerned for the evils of humanity—though perfectly void of any rational foundation, yet possesses much moral charm when compared with the popular religions of Greece and Rome. The felicity of their deities consisted in the vilest debauchery; nor was there a crime, however deep its dye, that had not been committed and gloried in by some one of their numerous objects of worship[444].” Never, also, could the doctrine, that the gods take no concern in human affairs, appear more plausible than in the age of Lucretius, when the destiny of man seemed to be the sport of the caprice of such a monster as Sylla.

With respect to the other great leading tenet of Lucretius and his master—the mortality of the soul, still greater injustice is done to the philosopher and poet. It is affirmed, and justly, by a great Apostle, that life and immortality have been brought to light by the gospel; and yet an author who lived before this dawn is reviled because he asserts, that the natural arguments for the immortality of the soul, afforded by the analogies of nature, or principle of moral retribution, are weak and inconclusive! In fact, however, it is not by the truth of the system or general philosophical views in a poem, (for which no one consults it,) that its value is to be estimated; since a poetical work may be highly moral on account of its details, even when its systematic
[pg 258] scope is erroneous or apparently dangerous. Notwithstanding passages which seem to echo Spinosism, and almost to justify crime[445], the *Essay on Man* is rightly considered as the most moral production of our most moral poet. In like manner, where shall we find exhortations more eloquent than those of Lucretius, against ambition and cruelty, and luxury and lust,—against all the dishonest pleasures of the body, and all the turbulent passions of the mind.

In versifying the philosophical system of Epicurus, Lucretius appears to have taken Empedocles as his model. All the old Grecian bards of whom we have any account prior to Homer, as Orpheus, Linus, and Musæus, are said to have written poems on the driest and most difficult philosophical questions, particularly the generation of the world. The ancients evidently considered philosophical poetry as of the highest kind, and its themes are invariably placed in the mouths of their divinest songsters[446]. Whether Lucretius may have been indebted to any such ancient poems, still extant in his age, or to the subsequent productions of Palæphatus the Athenian, Antiochus, or Eratosthenes, who, as Suidas informs us, wrote poems on the structure of

the world, it is impossible now to determine; but he seems to have considerably availed himself of the work of Empedocles. The poem of that sumptuous, accomplished, and arrogant philosopher, entitled Περι φυσεως, and inscribed to his pupil Pausanias, was chiefly illustrative of the Pythagorean philosophy, in which he had been initiated. Aristotle speaks on the subject of the merits of Empedocles in a manner which does not seem to be perfectly consistent[447]; but we know that his poem was sufficiently celebrated to be publicly recited at the Olympic games, along with the works of Homer. Only a few fragments of his writings remain; from which, perhaps, it would be as unfair to judge him, as to estimate Lucretius by extracts from the physical portions of his poem. Those who have collected the detached fragments of his production[448], think that it
[pg 259] had been divided into three books; the first treating of the elements and universe,—the second of animals and man,—the third of the soul, as also of the nature and worship of the gods. His philosophical system was different from that of Lucretius; but he had discussed almost all the subjects on which the Roman bard afterwards expatiated. In particular, Lucretius appears to have derived from his predecessor his notion of the original generation of man from the teeming earth,—the production, at the beginning of the world, of a variety of defective monsters, which were not allowed to multiply their kinds,—the distribution of animals according to the prevalence of one or other of the four elements over the rest in their composition,—the vicissitudes of matter between life and inanimate substance,—and the leading doctrine, "mortem nihil ad nos pertinere," because absolute insensibility is the consequence of dissolution[449].

If Lucretius has in any degree benefited by the works of Empedocles, he has in return been most lavish and eloquent in his commendations. One of the most delightful features in the character of the Latin poet is, the glow of admiration with which he writes of his illustrious predecessors. His eulogy of the Sicilian philosopher, which he has so happily combined with that of the country which gave him birth, affords a beautiful example of his manner of infusing into everything a poetic sweetness, *Musæo contingens cuncta lepore*,—

"Quorum Agragantinus cum primis Empedocles est:
Insula quem Triquetris terrarum gessit in oris:
Quam fluitans circum magnis anfractibus, æquor
Ionium glaucis aspergit virus ab undis,
Angustoque fretu rapidum, mare dividit undis
Æoliæ terrarum oras a finibus ejus:
Hîc est vasta Charybdis, et hîc Ætnæa minantur
Murmura, flammarum rursum se conligere iras,
Faucibus eruptos iterum ut vis evomat igneis,
Ad cœlumque ferat flammäi fulgura rursum.
Quæ, quum magna modis multis miranda videtur
Gentibus humanis regio, visundaque fertur,
Rebus opima bonis, multa munita virûm vi;
[pg 260] Nil tamen hoc habuisse viro præclarius in se,
Nec sanctum magis, et mirum, carumque, videtur.
Carmina quin etiam divini pectoris ejus
Vociferantur, et exponunt præclara reperta;
Ut vix humana videatur stirpe creatus."—Lib. I. 717.

It was formerly mentioned, that Ennius had translated into Latin verse the Greek poem of Epicharmus, which, from the fragments preserved, appears to have contained many speculations with regard to the productive elements of which the world is composed, as also concerning the preservative powers of nature. To the works of Ennius our poet seems to have been indebted, partly as a model for enriching the still scanty Latin language with new terms, and partly as a treasury or storehouse of words already provided. Him, too, he celebrates with the most ardent and unfeigned enthusiasm:—

"Ennius ut noster cecinit, qui primus amæno
Detulit ex Helicone perenni fronde coronam,
Per genteis Italas hominum quæ clara clueret.
Et si præterea tamen esse Acherusia templa
Ennius æternis exponit versibus edens;
Quo neque permanent animæ, neque corpora nostra;
Sed quædam simulacra modis pallentia miris;
Unde, sibi exortam, semper florentis Homeri
Commemorat speciem, lacrumas et fundere salsas
Cœpisse, et RERUM NATURAM expandere dictis."—I. 122.

These writers, Empedocles and Ennius, were probably Lucretius' chief guides; and though the most original of the Latin poets, many of his finest passages may be traced to the Greeks. The beautiful lamentation,—

"Nam jam non domus accipiet te læta, neque uxor
Optuma, nec dulceis occurrent oscula nati
Præripere, et tacitâ pectus dulcedine tangunt," ——

is said to be translated from a dirge chaunted at Athenian funerals; and the passage where he represents the feigned tortures of hell as but the workings of a guilty and unquiet spirit, is versified from an oration of Æschines against Timarchus.

In the first and second books, Lucretius chiefly expounds the cosmogony, or physical part of his system—a system which had been originally founded by Leucippus, a philosopher of the Eleatic sect, and, from his time, had been successively improved by Democritus and Epicurus. He establishes in these books his two great principles,—that nothing can be made from nothing, and that nothing can ever be annihilated or return to nothing; and, that there is in the universe a void
[pg 261] or space, in which atoms interact. These atoms he believes to be the original component parts of all matter, as well as of animal life; and the arrangement of such corpuscles occasions, according to him, the whole difference in substances.

It cannot be denied, that in these two books particularly, (but the observation is in some degree applicable to the whole poem,) there are many barren tracts—many physiological, meteorological, and geological details—which are at once too incorrect for the philosophical, and too dry and abstract for the poetical reader. It is wonderful, however, how Lucretius contrives, by the beauty of his images, to give a picturesque colouring and illustration to the most unpromising topics. Near the beginning of his poem, for example, in attempting to prove a very abstract proposition, he says,—

> “Præterea, quur vere rosam, frumenta calore,
> Viteis auctumno fondi suadente videmus.”

Thus, by the introduction of the rose and vines, bestowing a fragrance and freshness, and covering, as it were, with verdure, the thorns and briars of abstract discussion. In like manner, when contending that nothing utterly perishes, but merely assumes another form, what a lovely rural landscape does he present to the imagination!

> —— “Pereunt imbres, ubi eos pater Æther
> In gremium matris Terräi præcipitavit:
> At nitidæ surgunt fruges, ramique virescunt
> Arboribus; crescunt ipsæ, fœtuque gravantur.
> Hinc alitur porro nostrum genus atque ferarum;
> Hinc lætas urbeis puerûm florere videmus,
> Frondiferasque novis avibus canere undique sylvas;
> Hinc, fessæ pecudes, pingues per pabula læta,
> Corpora deponunt, et candens lacteus humor
> Uberibus manat distentis; hinc nova proles
> Artubus infirmis teneras lasciva per herbas
> Ludit, lacte mero menteis percussa novellas.”

“Whoever,” says Warton, “imagines, with Tully, that Lucretius had not a great genius[450], is desired to cast his eye on two pictures he has given us at the beginning of his poem,—the first, of
[pg 262] Venus with her lover Mars, beautiful to the last degree, and more glowing than any picture painted by Titian; the second, of that terrible and gigantic figure the Demon of Superstition, worthy the energetic pencil of Michael Angelo. I am sure there is no piece by the hand of Guido, or the Carracci, that exceeds the following group of allegorical personages:

> “It Ver, et Venus; et, veris prænuncius, ante
> Pennatus graditur Zephyrus, vestigia propter,
> Flora quibus Mater, præspargens ante viäi,
> Cuncta coloribus egregiis et odoribus opplet.”

In spite, however, of the powers of Lucretius, it was impossible, from the very nature of his subject, but that some portions would prove altogether unsusceptible of poetical embellishment. Yet it may be doubted, whether these intractable passages, by the charm of contrast, do not add, like deserts to Oases in their bosom, an additional deliciousness in proportion to their own sterility. The lovely group above-mentioned by Warton, are clothed with additional beauty and enchantment, from starting, as it were, like Armida and her Nymphs, from the mossy rind of a rugged tree. The philosophical analysis, too, employed by Lucretius, impresses the mind with the conviction, that the poet is a profound thinker, and adds great force to his moral reflections. Above all, his fearlessness, if I may say so, produces this powerful effect. Dryden, in a well-known passage, where he has most happily characterized the general manner of Lucretius, observes, “If I am not mistaken, the distinguishing character of Lucretius—I mean, of his soul and genius—is a certain kind of noble pride, and positive assertion of his own opinions. He is everywhere confident of his own reason, and assuming an absolute command, not only over his vulgar readers, but even his patron, Memmius.... This is that particular dictatorship which is exercised by Lucretius; who, though often in the wrong, yet seems to deal *bona fide* with his reader, and tells him nothing but what he thinks.... He seems to disdain all manner of replies; and is so confident of his cause, that he is before-hand with his antagonists, urging for them whatever he imagined they could say, and leaving them, as he supposes, without an objection for the future. All this, too, with so much scorn and indignation, as if he were assured of the triumph, and need only enter into the lists.” Hence while, in other writers, the eulogy of virtue seems in some sort to partake of the nature of a sermon—to be a conventional language, and words of course—we listen
[pg 263] to Lucretius as to one who will fearlessly speak out; who had shut his ears to the murmurs of Acheron: and who, if he eulogizes Virtue, extols her because her charms are real. How exquisite, for example, and, at the same time, how powerful and convincing, his delineation of the utter worthlessness of vanity and pomp, contrasted with the pure and perfect delights of simple

nature!

"Si non aurea sunt juvenum simulacra per ædes,
Lampadas igniferas manibus retinentia dextris,
Lumina nocturnis epulis ut suppeditentur,
Nec domus argento fulget auroque renidet,
Nec citharæ reboant laqueata aurataque tecta;
Quum tamen inter se, prostrati in gramine molli,
Propter aquæ rivum, sub ramis arboris altæ,
Non magnis opibus jucunde corpora curant:
Præsertim, quum tempestas arridet, et anni
Tempora conspargunt viridantes floribus herbas:
Nec calidæ citius decedunt corpore febres,
Textilibus si in picturis, ostroque rubenti,
Jaceris, quam si plebeiâ in veste cubandum est."—II. 24.

The word *Præsertim*, in this beautiful passage, affords an illustration of what has been remarked above, that the kind of philosophical analysis employed by Lucretius gives great force to his moral reflections. He seems, as it were, to be weighing his words; and, which is the only solid foundation of just confidence, to be cautious of asserting anything which experience would not fully confirm. One thing very remarkable in this great poet is, the admirable clearness and closeness of his reasoning. He repeatedly values himself not a little on the circumstance, that, with an intractable subject, and a language not yet accommodated to philosophical discussions, and scanty in terms of physical as well as metaphysical science, he was able to give so much clearness to his argument[451]; which object it is generally admitted he has accomplished, with little or no sacrifice of pure Latinity[452]. As a proof at once of the perspicuity and closeness of his reasoning, and the fertility of his mind in inventing arguments, there might be given his long discussion, in the third book, on the materiality of the human soul, and its incapability of surviving the ruin of the corporeal frame. Never were the arguments for materialism marshalled
[pg 264] with such skill—never were the diseases of the mind, and the decay of memory and understanding, so pathetically urged, so eloquently expressed. The following quotation contains a specimen of the lucid and logical reasoning of this philosophic poet; and the two first verses, perhaps, after all that has been written, comprehend the whole that is metaphysically or physiologically known upon the subject:

"Præterea, gigni pariter cum corpore, et unà
Crescere sentimus, pariterque senescere, mentem.
Nam, velut infirmo pueri, teneroque, vagantur
Corpore, sic animi sequitur sententia tenuis;
Inde, ubi robustis adolevit viribus ætas,
Consilium quoque majus, et auctior est animî vis.
Post, ubi jam validis quassatum est viribus ævi
Corpus, et obtusis ceciderunt viribus artus,
Claudicat ingenium, delirat linguaque mensque;
Omnia deficiunt, atque uno tempore desunt:
Ergo, dissolvi quoque convenit omnem animäi
Naturam, ceu fumus in altas aëris auras;
Quandoquidem gigni pariter, pariterque videmus
Crescere; et, ut docui, simul, ævo fessa, fatisci."—III. 446.

Lucretius having, by many arguments, endeavoured to establish the mortality of the soul, proceeds to exhort against a dread of death. The fear of that "last tremendous blow," appears to have harassed, and sometimes overwhelmed, the minds of the Romans[453]. To them, life presented a scene of high duties and honourable labours; and they contemplated, in a long futurity, the distant completion of their serious and lofty aims. They were not yet habituated to regard life as a banquet or recreation, from which they were cheerfully to rise, in due time, sated with the feast prepared for them; nor had they been accustomed to associate death with those softening ideas of indolence and slumber, with which it was the design of Lucretius to connect it. He accordingly represents it as a privation of all sense,—as undisturbed by tumult or terror, by grief or pain,—as a tranquil sleep, and an everlasting repose. How sublime is the following passage, in which, to illustrate his argument, that the long night of the grave can be no more painful than the eternity before our birth, he introduces the war with Carthage; and what a picture does it convey of the energy and might of the combatants!

"Nil igitur Mors est, ad nos neque pertinet hilum,
Quandoquidem natura animi mortalis habetur.
[pg 265] Et, velut ante acto nil tempore sensimus ægrî,
Ad confligundum venientibus undique Pœnis;
Omnia quum, belli trepido concussa tumultu,
Horrida contremuere sub altis ætheris auris:
In dubioque fuere, utrorum ad regna cadundum
Omnibus humanis esset, terràque, màrique.
Sic, ubi non erimus, quum corporis atque animäi
Discidium fuerit, quibus e sumus uniter apti;
Scilicet haud nobis quidquam, qui non erimus tum,

Accidere omnino poterit, sensumque movere:
Non si terra mari miscebitur, et mare cœlo."—III, 842.

From this admirable passage till the close of the third book there is an union of philosophy, of majesty, and pathos, which hardly ever has been equalled. The incapacity of the highest power and wisdom, as exhibited in so many instances, to exempt from the common lot of man, the farewell which we must bid to the sweetest domestic enjoyments, and the magnificent *prosopopœia* of Nature to her children, rebuking their regrets, and the injustice of their complaints, are altogether exceedingly solemn, and affecting, and sublime.

The two leading tenets of Epicurus concerning the formation of the world and the mortality of the soul, are established by Lucretius in the first three books. A great proportion of the fourth book may be considered as episodical. Having explained the nature of primordial atoms, and of the soul, which is formed from the finest of them, he announces, that there are certain images (*rerum simulacra*,) or effluvia, which are constantly thrown off from the surface of whatever exists. On this hypothesis he accounts for all our external senses; and he applies it also to the theory of dreams, in which whatever images have amused the senses during day most readily recur. Mankind being prone to love, of all the phantoms which rush on our imagination during night, none return so frequently as the forms of the fair. This leads Lucretius to enlarge on the mischievous effects of illicit love; and nothing can be finer than the various moral considerations which he enforces, to warn us against the snares of guilty passion. It must, however, be confessed, that his description of what he seems to consider as the physical evils and imperfect fruition of sensual love, forms the most glowing picture ever presented of its delights. But he has atoned for his violation of decorum, by a few beautiful lines on connubial happiness at the conclusion of the book:

"Nam facit ipsa suis interdum femina factis,
Morigerisque modis et mundo corpore culta,
Ut facile assuescat secum vir degere vitam.
Quod super est, consuetudo concinnat amorem;
Nam, leviter quamvis, quod crebro tunditur ictu,
[pg 266] Vincitur id longo spatio tamen, atque labascit:
Nonne vides, etiam guttas, in saxa cadenteis,
Humoris longo in spacio pertundere saxa?"—IV. 1273.

The principal subject of the fifth book—a composition unrivalled in energy and richness of language, in full and genuine sublimity—is the origin and laws of the visible world, with those of its inhabitants. The poet presents us with a grand picture of Chaos, and the most magnificent account of the creation that ever flowed from human pen. In his representation of primeval life and manners, he exhibits the discomfort of this early stage of society by a single passage of most wild and powerful imagery,—in which he describes a savage, in the early ages of the world, when men were yet contending with beasts for possession of the earth, flying through the woods, with loud shrieks, in a stormy night, from the pursuit of some ravenous animal, which had invaded the cavern where he sought a temporary shelter and repose:

—— "Sæcla ferarum
Infestam miseris faciebant sæpe quietem;
Ejecteique domo, fugiebant saxea tecta
Setigeri suis adventu, validique leonis;
Atque intempestâ cedebant nocte, paventes,
Hospitibus sævis instrata cubilia fronde."—V. 980.

One is naturally led to compare the whole of Lucretius' description of primeval society, and the origin of man, with Ovid's *Four Ages of the World*, which commence his *Metamorphoses*, and which, philosophically considered, certainly exhibit the most wonderful of all metamorphoses. In his sketch of the Golden Age, he has selected the favourable circumstances alluded to by Lucretius—exemption from war and sea voyages, and spontaneous production of fruits by the earth. There is also a beautiful view of early life and manners in one of the elegies of Tibullus[454]; and Thomson, in his picture of what he calls the "prime of days," has combined the descriptions of Ovid and the elegiac bard. Most of the poets, however, who have painted the Golden Age, and Ovid in particular, have represented mankind as growing more vicious and unhappy with advance of time—Lucretius, more philosophically, as constantly improving. He has fixed on connubial love as the first great softener of the human breast; and neither Thomson nor Milton has described with more tenderness, truth, and purity, the joys of domestic union. He follows the progressive
[pg 267] improvement of mankind occasioned by their subjection to the bonds of civil society and government; and the book concludes with an account of the origin of the fine arts, particularly music, in the course of which many impressive descriptions occur, and many delicious scenes are unfolded:

"At liquidas avium voces imitarier ore
Ante fuit multo, quam lævia carmina cantu
Concelebrare homines possent, aureisque juvare.
Et zephyri, cava per calamorum, sibila primum
Agrestes docuere cavas inflare cicutas.
Inde minutatim dulces didicere querelas
Tibia quas fundit, digitis pulsata canentûm,

Avia per nemora ac sylvas saltusque reperta,
Per loca pastorum deserta, atque otia dia."—V. 1378.

In consequence of their ignorance and superstitions, the Roman people were rendered perpetual slaves of the most idle and unfounded terrors. In order to counteract these popular prejudices, and to heal the constant disquietudes that accompanied them, Lucretius proceeds, in the sixth book, to account for a variety of extraordinary phænomena both in the heavens and on the earth, which, at first view, seemed to deviate from the usual laws of nature:—

"Sunt tempestates et fulmina clara canenda."

Having discussed the various theories formed to account for electricity, water-spouts, hurricanes, the rainbow, and volcanoes, he lastly considers the origin of pestilential and endemic disorders. This introduces the celebrated account of the plague, which ravaged Athens during the Peloponnesian war, with which Lucretius concludes this book, and his magnificent poem. "In this narrative," says a late translator of Lucretius, "the true genius of poetry is perhaps more powerfully and triumphantly exhibited than in any other poem that was ever written. Lucretius has ventured upon one of the most uncouth and repressing subjects to the muses that can possibly be brought forward—the history and symptoms of a disease, and this disease accompanied with circumstances naturally the most nauseating and indelicate. It was a subject altogether new to numerical composition; and he had to strive with all the pedantry of technical terms, and all the abstruseness of a science in which he does not appear to have been professionally initiated. He strove, however, and he conquered. In language the most captivating and nervous, and with ideas the most precise and appropriate, he has given us the entire history
[pg 268] of this tremendous pestilence. There is not, perhaps, a symptom omitted, yet there is not a verse with which the most scrupulous can be offended. The description of the symptoms, and also the various circumstances of horror and distress attending this dreadful scourge, have been derived from Thucydides, who furnished the facts with great accuracy, having been himself a spectator and a sufferer under this calamity. His narrative is esteemed an elaborate and complete performance; and to the faithful yet elegant detail of the Greek historian, the Roman bard has added all that was necessary to convert the description into poetry."

In the whole history of Roman taste and criticism, nothing appears to us so extraordinary as the slight mention that is made of Lucretius by succeeding Latin authors; and, when mentioned, the coldness with which he is spoken of by all Roman critics and poets, with the exception of Ovid. Perhaps the spirit of free-thinking which pervaded his writings, rendered it unsuitable or unsafe to extol even his poetical talents. There was a time, when, in this country, it was thought scarcely decorous or becoming to express high admiration of the genius of Rousseau or Voltaire.

The doctrines of Lucretius, particularly that which impugns the superintending care of Providence, were first formally opposed by the Stoic Manilius in his Astronomic poem. In modern times, his whole philosophical system has been refuted in the long and elaborate poem of the Cardinal Polignac, entitled, *Anti-Lucretius, sive de Deo et Natura*. This enormous work, though incomplete, consists of nine books, of about 1300 lines each, and the whole is addressed to Quintius, an atheist, who corresponds to the Lorenzo of the *Night Thoughts*. Descartes is the Epicurus of the poem, and the subject of many heavy panegyrics. In the philosophical part of his subject, the Cardinal has sometimes refuted, at too great length, propositions which are manifestly absurd—at others, he has impugned demonstrated truths—and the moral system of Lucretius he throughout has grossly misunderstood. But he has rendered ample justice to his poetical merit; and, in giving a compendium of the subject of his great antagonist's poem, he has caught some share of the poetical spirit with which his predecessor was inspired:—

"Hic agitare velit Cytheriam inglorius artem:
Hic myrtum floresque legat, quos tinxit Adonis
Sanguine, dilectus Veneri puer; aut Heliconem,
Et colles Baccho, partim, Phœboque sacratos
Incolat. Hic, placidi latebris in mollibus antri,
Silenum recubantem, et amico nectare venas
Inflatum stupeat titubanti voce canentem;
Et juvenum cæcos ignes, et vulnera dicat,
[pg 269] Et vacuæ, pulsis terroribus, otia vitæ,
Fœcundosque greges, et amæni gaudia ruris:
Hæc et plura canens, avidè bibat ore diserto
Pegaseos latices; et nomen grande Poetæ,
Non Sapientis, amet. Lauro insignire poetam
Quis dubitet? Primus viridanteis ipse coronas
Imponam capiti, et meritas pro carmine laudes
Ante alios dicam." ——[455]

Entertaining this just admiration of his opponent, the Cardinal has been studious, while refuting his principles, to imitate as closely as possible the poetic style of Lucretius; and, accordingly, we find many noble and beautiful passages interspersed amid the dry discussions of the *Anti-Lucretius*. In the first book, there is an elegant comparison, something like that by Wolsey in *Henry VIII.*, of a man who had wantoned in the sunshine of prosperity, and was unprepared for the storms of adversity, to the tender buds of the fruit-tree blighted by the north-wind. The whole poem, indeed, is full of many beautiful and appropriate similes. I have not room to transcribe

them, but may refer the reader to those in the first book, of a sick man turning to every side for rest, to a traveller following an *ignis fatuus*; in the second, motes dancing in the sun-beam to the atoms of Epicurus floating in the immensity of space; in the third, the whole philosophy of Epicurus to the infinite variety of splendid but fallacious appearances produced by the shifting of scenery in our theatres, (line 90,) and the identity of matter amid the various shapes it assumes, to the transformations of *Proteus*. The fourth book commences with a beautiful image of a traveller on a steep, looking back on his journey; immediately followed by a fine picture of the unhallowed triumph of Epicurus, and Religion weeping during the festival of youths to his honour. In the same book, there is a noble description of the river Anio, (line 1459,) and a comparison of the rising of sap in trees during spring to a fountain playing and falling back on itself (780–845). We have in the fifth book a beautiful argument, that the soul is not to be thought material, because affected by the body, illustrated by musical instruments (745). In the sixth book there occurs a charming description of the sensitive plant; and, finally, of a bird singing to his mate, to solace her while brooding over her young:—

"Haud secus in sylvis, ac frondes inter opacas,
Ingenitum carmen modulatur musicus ales," &c.

[pg 270] Almost all modern didactic poems, whether treating of theology or physics, are composed in obvious imitation of the style and manner of Lucretius. The poem of Aonius Palearius, *De Animi Immortalitate*, though written in contradiction to the system of Lucretius, concerning the mortality of the soul, is almost a *cento* made up from lines or half lines of the Roman bard; and the same may be said of that extensive class of Latin poems, in which the French Jesuits of the seventeenth century have illustrated the various phænomena of nature[456].

Others have attempted to explain the philosophy of Newton in Latin verse; but the Newtonian system is better calculated to be demonstrated than sung—

"Ornari res ipsa negat—contenta doceri."

It is a philosophy founded on the most sublime calculations; and it is in other lines and numbers than those of poetry, that the book of nature must now be written. If we attempt to express arithmetical or algebraical figures in verse, circumlocution is always required; more frequently they cannot be expressed at all; and if they could, the lines would have no advantage over prose: nay, would have considerable disadvantage, from obscurity and prolixity. All this is fully confirmed by an examination of the writings of those who have attempted to embellish the sublime system of Newton with the charms of poetry. If we look, for example, into the poem of Boscovich on Eclipses, or still more, into the work of Benedict Stay, we shall see, notwithstanding the advantage they possessed of writing in a language so flexible as the Latin, and so capable of inversion,

"The shifts and turns,
The expedients and inventions multiform,
To which the mind resorts in search of terms[457]."

The latter of these writers employs 36 lines in expressing the law of Kepler, "that the squares of the periodical times of the revolutions of the planets, are as the cubes of their mean distances from the sun." These lines, too, which are considered by Stay himself, and by Boscovich, his annotator, as the triumph of the philosophic muse, are so obscure as to need a long commentary. Indeed, the poems of both these eminent men consist of a string of enigmas, whereas the
[pg 271] principal and almost only ornament of philosophy is perspicuity. After all, only what are called the round numbers can be expressed in verse, and this is necessarily done in a manner so obscure and perplexed as ever to need a prose explanation.

With Lucretius and his subject it was totally the reverse. From the incorrectness of his philosophical views, or rather those of his age, much of his labour has been employed, so to speak, in embodying straws in amber. Yet, with all its defects, this ancient philosophy, if it deserve the name, had the advantage, that its indefinite nature rendered it highly susceptible of an embellishment, which can never be bestowed on a more precise and accurate system. Hence, perhaps, it may be safely foretold, that the philosophical poem of Lucretius will remain unrivalled; and also, that the prediction of Ovid concerning it will be verified—

"Carmina sublimis, tunc sunt peritura Lucretî
Exitio terras cum dabit una dies."

The refutations and imitations of Lucretius, contained in modern didactic poems, have led me away from what may be considered as my proper subject, and I therefore return to those poets who were coeval with that author, with whose works we have been so long occupied. Of these the most distinguished was

CAIUS VALERIUS CATULLUS,

who was nearly contemporary with Lucretius, having come into the world a few years after him, and having survived him but a short period.

In every part of our survey of Latin Literature, we have had occasion to remark the imitative spirit of Roman poetry, and the constant analogy and resemblance of all the productions of the Latian muse to some Greek original. None of his poetical predecessors was more versed in Greek literature than Catullus; and his extensive knowledge of its beauties procured for him the
[pg 272] appellation of *Doctus*[458]. He translated many of the shorter and more delicate pieces of the Greeks; an attempt which hitherto had been thought impossible, though the broad humour of their comedies, the vehement pathos of their tragedies, and the romantic interest of the Odyssey, had stood the transformation. His stay in Bithynia, though little advantageous to his fortune, rendered him better acquainted than he might otherwise have been with the productions of Greece, and he was therefore, in a great degree, indebted to this expedition (on which he always appears to have looked back with mortification and disappointment) for those felicitous turns of expression, that grace, simplicity, and purity, which are the characteristics of his poems, and of which hitherto Greece alone had afforded models. Indeed, in all his verses, whether elegiac or heroic, we perceive his imitation of the Greeks, and it must be admitted that he has drawn from them his choicest stores. His Hellenisms are frequent—his images, similes, metaphors, and addresses to himself, are all Greek; and even in the versification of his odes we see visible traces of their origin. Nevertheless, he was the founder of a new school of *Latin* poetry; and as he was the first who used such variety of measures, and perhaps himself invented some[459], he was amply
[pg 273] entitled to call the poetical volume which he presented to Cornelius Nepos, *Lepidum Novum Libellum*. The beautiful expressions, too, and idioms of the Greek language, which he has so carefully selected, are woven with such art into the texture of his composition, and so aptly figure the impassioned ideas of his amorous muse, that they have all the fresh and untarnished hues of originality.

This elegant poet was born of respectable parents, in the territory of Verona, but whether at the town so called, or on the peninsula of Sirmio, which projects into the Lake Benacus, has been a subject of much controversy. The former opinion has been maintained by Maffei and Bayle[460], and the latter by Gyraldus[461], Schoell[462], Fuhrmann[463], and most modern writers.

[pg 274] The precise period, as well as place, of the birth of Catullus, is a topic of debate and uncertainty. According to the Eusebian Chronicle, he was born in 666, but, according to other authorities, in 667[464] or 668. In consequence of an invitation from Manlius Torquatus, one of the noblest patricians of the state, he proceeded in early youth to Rome, where he appears to have kept but indifferent company, at least in point of moral character. He impaired his fortune so much by extravagance, that he had no one, as he complains,

> “Fractum qui veteris pedem grabati
> In collo sibi collocare possit.”

This, however, must partly have been written in jest, as his finances were always sufficient to allow him to keep up a delicious villa, on the peninsula of Sirmio, and an expensive residence at Tibur. With a view of improving his pecuniary circumstances, he adopted the usual Roman mode of re-establishing a diminished fortune, and accompanied Caius Memmius, the celebrated patron of Lucretius, to Bithynia, when he was appointed Prætor of that province. His situation, however, was but little meliorated by this expedition, and, in the course of it, he lost a beloved brother, who was along with him, and whose death he has lamented in verses never surpassed in delicacy or pathos. He came back to Rome with a shattered constitution, and a lacerated heart. From the period of his return to Italy till his decease, his time appears to have been chiefly occupied with the prosecution of licentious amours, in the capital or among the solitudes of Sirmio. The Eusebian Chronicle places his death in 696, and some writers fix it in 705. It is evident, however, that he must have survived at least till 708, as Cicero, in his Letters, talks of his verses against Cæsar and Mamurra as newly written, and first seen by Cæsar in that year[465]. The distracted and unhappy state of his country, and his disgust at the treatment which he had received from Memmius, were perhaps sufficient excuse for shunning political employments[466]; but when we consider his taste and genius, we cannot help regretting that he was merely an idler, and a debauchee. He loved Clodia, (supposed to have been the sister of the infamous Clodius,) a
[pg 275] beautiful but shameless woman, whom he has celebrated under the name of Lesbia[467], as comparing her to the Lesbian Sappho, her prototype in total abandonment to guilty love. He also numbered among his mistresses, Hypsithilla and Aufilena, ladies of Verona. Among his friends, he ranked not only most men of pleasure and fashion in Rome, but many of her eminent literary and political characters, as Cornelius Nepos, Cicero, and Asinius Pollio. His enmities seem to have been as numerous as his loves or friendships, and competition in poetry, or rivalship in gallantry, appears always to have been a sufficient cause for his dislike; and where an antipathy was once conceived, he was unable to put any restraint on the expression of his hostile feelings. His poems are chiefly employed in the indulgence and commemoration of these various passions. They are now given to us without any order or attempt at arrangement: They were distributed, indeed, by Petrus Crinitus, into three classes, lyric, elegiac, and epigrammatic,—a division which has been adopted in a few of the earlier editions; but there is no such separation in the best MSS., nor is it probable that they were originally thus classed by the author, as he calls his book *Libellum Singularem*; and they cannot now be conveniently reduced under these heads, since several poems, as the nuptials of Peleus and Thetis, are written in hexameter measure. To others, which may be termed occasional poems expressing to his friends a simple idea, or relating the

occurrences of the day, in iambic or phalangian verse, it would be difficult to assign any place in a systematic arrangement. Under what class, for instance, could we bring the poem giving a detail of his visit to the house of the courtezan, and the conversation which passed there concerning Bithynia? The order, therefore, in which the poems have been arbitrarily placed by the latest editors and commentators, however immethodical, is the only one which can be followed, in giving an account of the miscellaneous productions of Catullus.

1. Is a modest and not inelegant dedication, by the poet, of the whole volume, to Cornelius Nepos, whom he compliments on having written a general history, in three books, an undertaking which had not previously been attempted by any Roman—

—— "Ausus es unus Italorum
Omne ævum tribus explicare chartis."

2. *Ad Passerem Lesbiæ*. This address of Catullus to the favourite sparrow of his mistress, Lesbia,
[pg 276] is well known, and, has been always celebrated as a model of grace and elegance. Politian[468], Turnebus, and others, have discovered in this little poem an allegorical signification, which idea has been founded on a line in an epigram of Martial, *Ad Romam et Dindymum*—

"Quæ si tot fuerint, quot ille dixit,
Donabo tibi passerem Catulli[469]."

That by the *passer Catulli*, however, Martial meant nothing more than an agreeable little epigram, in the style of Catullus, which he would address to Dindymus as his reward, is evident from another epigram, where it is obviously used in this sense—

"Sic forsan tener ausus est Catullus
Magno mittere passerem Maroni[470]."

and also from that in which he compares a favourite whelp of Publius to the sparrow of Lesbia[471]. That a real and *feathered* sparrow was in the view of Catullus, is also evinced by the following ode, in which he laments the death of this favourite of his mistress. The erroneous notion taken up by Politian, has been happily enough ridiculed by Sannazzarius, in an epigram entitled *Ad Pulicianum*—

"At nescio quis Pulicianus," &c.

and Muretus expresses his astonishment, that the most grave and learned Benedictus Lampridius should have made this happy interpretation by Politian the theme of his *constant* conversation, "Hanc Politiani sententiam in *omni* sermone approbare solitum fuisse[472]." Why Lesbia preferred a sparrow to other birds, I know not, unless it was for those qualities which induced the widow of the Emperor Sigismond to esteem it more than the turtle-dove[473], and which so much excited the envy of the learned Scioppius, at Ingolstadt.

3. *Luctus in morte Passeris*. A lamentation for the death of the same sparrow—

"Qui nunc it per iter tenebricosum,
Illuc unde negant redire quemquam:
At vobis male sit, malæ tenebræ
Orci, quæ omnia bella devoratis."

[pg 277] The idea in this last line was probably taken from Bion's celebrated *Idyllium*—the lamentation of Venus for the death of Adonis, where there is a similar complaint of the unrelenting Orcus—

"Το δε παν καλον ἐς σε καταῤρει."

This poem on the death of Lesbia's sparrow has suggested many similar productions. Ovid's elegy, *In Mortem Psittaci*[474], where he extols and laments the favourite parrot of his mistress, Corinna, is a production of the same description; but it has not so much delicacy, lightness, and felicity of expression. It differs from it too, by directing the attention chiefly to the parrot, whereas Catullus fixes it more on the lady, who had been deprived of her favourite. Statius also has a poem on the death of a parrot, entitled *Psittacus Melioris*[475]; and Lotichius, a celebrated Latin poet, who flourished in Germany about the middle of the 16th century, has, in his elegies, a similar production on the death of a dolphin[476]. Naugerius, *In Obitum Borgetti Catuli*, nearly copies the poem of Catullus—

"Nunc raptus rapido maloque fato,
Ad manes abiit tenebricosas," &c.

It has been imitated closely, and with application to a sparrow, by Corrozet, Durant, and Monnoye, French poets of the 16th century—by Gacon and Richer, in the beginning, and R. de Juvigny, in the end, of the 18th century. In all these imitations, the idea of a departure to regions of darkness, whence no one returns, is faithfully preserved. Most of them are written with much grace and elegance; and this, indeed, is a sort of poetry in which the French remarkably excel.

4. *Dedicatio Phaseli*. This is the consecration to Castor and Pollux, of the vessel which brought the poet safe from Bithynia to the shores of Italy. By a figure, daring even in verse, he represents

the ship as extolling its high services, and claiming its well-earned dedication to Castor and Pollux, gods propitious to mariners. From this poem we may trace the progress of Catullus's voyage: It would appear that he had embarked from Pontus, and having coasted Thrace, sailed through the Archipelago, and then into the Adriatic, whence the vessel had been brought probably up the course of the Po, and one of its branches, to the vicinity of Sirmio.

[pg 278] There have been nearly as many parodies of this poem, as imitations of that last mentioned. The collector of the *Catalecta Virgilii*, has attributed to Virgil a satire on Ventidius, (under the name of Sabinus,) who, from a muleteer, became consul, in the reign of Augustus, and which is parodied from Catullus—

"Sabinus ille quem videtis hospites," &c.

Another parody is a Latin poem, entitled *Lycoris*, by Adrien Valois, published at the end of the *Valesiana*, where a courtezan, retired from the world, is introduced, boasting of the various intrigues of her former life. Nicol Heinelius published not less than fifty parodies of this poem, in a small book entitled "Phaselus Catulli, et ad eundem Parodiarum a diversis auctoribus scriptarum decades quinque; ex Bibliotheca Nic. Heinelii, Jurisconsulti, Lips. 1642." Scaliger has also translated the *Phaselus* of Catullus into Greek iambics.

5. *Ad Lesbiam*—

"Vivamus, mea Lesbia, atque amemus,
Rumoresque senum severiorum
Omnes unius æstimemus assis.
Soles occidere et redire possunt:
Nobis, cum semel occidit brevis lux,
Nox est perpetua una dormienda.
Da mihi basia mille, deinde centum."

This sentiment, representing either the pleasure of conviviality, or delights of love, (and much more so as when here united,) in contrast with the gloom of death, possesses something exquisitely tender and affecting. The picture of joy, with Death in the distance, inspires a feeling of pensive morality, adding a charm to the gayest scenes of life, as the transientness of the rose enhances our sense of its beauty and fragrance; and as the cloud, which throws a shade over the horizon, sometimes softens and mellows the prospect. This opposition of images succeeds even in painting; and the Arcadian landscape of Poussin, representing the rural festivity of swains, would lose much of its charm if it wanted the monument and inscription. An example had been set of such contrasted ideas in many epigrams of the Greeks, and also in the Odes of Anacreon, who constantly excites himself and fellow-passengers to unrestrained enjoyment at every stage, by recalling to remembrance the irresistible speed with which they are hurried to the conclusion of their journey—

[pg 279] "Ὁ δ' Ερως, χιτωνα δησας
Ὑπερ αυχενος παπυρῳ,
Μεθυ μοι διηκονειτω.
Τροχος αρματος γαρ οἵα
Βιωτος τρεχει κυλισθεις.
Ὀλιγη δε κεισομεσθα
Κονις, ὀστεων λυθεντων."
Od. IV.

"The ungodly," says the *Wisdom of Solomon*, "reason with themselves, but not aright. Our life is short—our time is a very shadow that passeth away—and, after our end, there is no returning. Come on, therefore, let us enjoy the good things that are present, and let us speedily use the creatures like as in youth. Let us fill ourselves with costly wine and ointments, and let no flower of the spring pass by us; let us crown ourselves with rose-buds, before they be withered. Let none of us go without his part of our voluptuousness; let us leave tokens of our joyfulness in every place: For this is our portion, and our lot in this[477]."

Among the Latin poets no specimen, perhaps, exists so perfect of this voluptuous yet pensive morality or immorality, as the *Vivamus, mea Lesbia*, of Catullus. It is a theme, too, in which he has been frequently followed, if not imitated, by succeeding poets—by Horace, in particular, who, amid all the delights of love and wine, seldom allows himself to forget the closing scene of existence. Many of them too, like Catullus, have employed the argument of the certainty and speediness of death for the promotion of love and pleasure—

"Interea, dum fata sinunt, jungamus amores;
Jam veniet tenebris Mors adoperta caput[478]."

And, in like manner, Propertius—

"Dum nos fata sinunt, oculos satiemus amore;
Nox tibi longa venit nec reditura dies."

There is not much of this in the amatory or convivial poetry of the moderns. Waller has some traces of it; but a modern prose writer hath most beautifully, and with greater boldness than any

of his predecessors, represented not merely the thoughts, but the actual image of mortality and decay, as exciting to a more full and rapid grasp at tangible enjoyments. Anastasius, while journeying amid the tombs of Scutari, breathing the damp deadly effluvia, and treading on a
[pg 280] swelling soil, ready to burst with its festering contents, asks himself,—"Shall I, creature of clay like those here buried—I, who travel through life as I do on this road, with the remains of past generations strewed around me—I, who, whether my journey last a few hours, more or less, must still, like those here deposited, in a short time rejoin the silent tenants of a cluster of tombs—be stretched out by the side of some already sleeping corpse—and be left to rest, for the remainder of time, with all my hopes and fears, all my faculties and prospects, consigned to a cold couch of clammy earth—Shall I leave the rose to blush along my path unheeded—the purple grape to wither unculled over my head * * *? Far from my thoughts be such folly! Whatever tempts, let me take—whatever bears the name of enjoyment henceforth, let me, while I can, make my own[479]."—The French writers, like Chaulieu and Gresset, who paint themselves as finding in philosophy and the Muses sufficient compensation for the dissatisfaction attending worldly pleasures, frequently urge the shortness of life, not as an argument for indulging in wantonness or wine, but for enjoying, to the utmost, the innocent delights of rural tranquillity—

"Fontenay, lieu délicieux,
Ou je vis d'abord la lumiere,
Bientôt au bout de ma carriere
Chez toi je joindrai mes ayeux.

"Muses, qui dans ce lieu champêtre
Avec soin me fites nourrir—
Beaux arbres qui m'avez vu naître
Bientôt vous me verrez mourir:

"Cependant du frais de votre ombre
Il faut sagement profiter,
Sans regret pret a vous quitter
Pour ce Manoir terrible et sombre."—*Chaulieu.*

The united sentiment of enjoying the delights of love, and beauties of nature, as suggested by the shortness of the period allotted for their possession, has been happily expressed by Mallet, in his celebrated song to the Scotch tune, *The Birks of Invermay*:

"Let us, Amanda, timely wise,
Like *them* improve the hour that flies;
For soon the winter of the year,
And Age, life's winter, will appear.
At this thy living bloom must fade,
As that will strip the verdant shade:
[pg 281] Our taste of pleasure then is o'er—
The feathered songsters love no more:
And when they droop, and we decay,
Adieu, the shades of Invermay!"

It will not fail, however, to be remarked, that in the ode of Catullus, which has recalled these verses to our recollection, there is a double contrast, from comparing the long, dark, and everlasting sleep—the μακρον, ατερμονα, νηγρετον ὑπνον, with the quick and constant succession of suns, by which we are daily enlightened—

"Soles occidere et redire possunt:
Nobis, cum semel occidit brevis lux,
Nox est perpetua una dormienda."

Poets, in all ages, have been fond of contrasting the destined course of human life with the reparation of the sun and moon, and with the revival of nature, produced by the succession of seasons. The image drawn from the sun, and here employed by Catullus, is one of the most natural and frequent. It has been beautifully attempted by several modern Latin poets. Thus by Lotichius—

"Ergo ubi permensus cœlum sol occidit, idem
    Purpureo vestit lumine rursus humum:
Nos ubi decidimus, defuncti munere vitæ,
    Urget perpetua lumina nocte sopor."

And still more successfully by Jortin—

"Hei mihi lege ratà sol occidit atque resurgit.
 * * * *
Nos domini rerum—nos magna et pulchra minati,
Cum breve ver vitæ robustaque transiit ætas,
Deficimus; neque nos ordo revolubilis auras
Reddit in ætherias, tumuli nec claustra resolvit."

Other modern Latin poets have chosen this ode as a sort of theme or text, which they have dilated into long poems. Of these, perhaps the most agreeable is a youthful production of Muretus—

"Ludamus, mea Margari, et jocemur," &c.

The most ancient French imitator is the old poet Baif, in a sort of Madrigal. He was followed by Ronsard, Bellay, Pellisson, La Monnoye, and Dorat. The best imitation, I think, is that by Simon, which I shall give at full length, once for all as a fair specimen of the French mode of imitating the lighter poems of Catullus—

[pg 282]

"Vivens, O ma Julie!
Jurons d'aimer toujours:
Le printemps de la vie
Est fait pour les amours.
Si l'austère vieillesse
Condamne nos desirs,
Laissons lui sa sagesse,
Et gardons nos plaisirs.

"L'Astre dont la lumiere
Nous dispense les jours,
Au bout de sa carriere
Recommence son cours.
Quand le temps, dans sa rage,
A fletti les appas,
Les roses du bel âge
Ne refleurissent pas.

"D'une pudeur farouche
Fuis les deguisemens;
Viens donner à ma bouche
Cent baisers ravissans—
Mille autres—Pose encore
Sur mes lèvres de feu
Tes lèvres que j'adore—
Mourons à ce doux jeu.

"De nos baisers sans nombre
Le feu rapide et doux
S'échappe comme l'ombre,
Et passe loin de nous:
Mais le sentiment tendre
D'un heureux souvenir,
Dans mon cœur vient reprendre,
La place du plaisir."

7. *Ad Lesbiam*. His mistress had asked Catullus how many kisses would satisfy him, and he answers that they must be as numerous as the sands of the sea—

"Aut quam sidera multa, cum tacet nox,
Furtivos hominum vident amores."

These two lines seem to have been in the view of Ariosto, in the 14th canto of the *Orlando*—

"E per quanti occhi il ciel le furtive opre
Degli amatori, a mezza notte, scopre."

Martial likewise imitates, and refers to this and to the 5th poem of Catullus, in the 34th epigram of the 6th book—

"Basia da nobis, Diadumene, pressa: quot? inquis—
Oceani fluctus me numerare jubes;
Et maris Ægæi sparsas per littora conchas,
Et quæ Cecropio monte vagantur apes.
Nolo quot arguto dedit exorata Catullo
Lesbia: pauca cupit, qui numerare potest."

[pg 283]

The verses of Catullus have been also imitated in Latin by Sannazzarius, by Joannes Secundus, of course, in his *Basia*, and by almost all the ancient amatory poets of France.

8. *Ad Seipsum*. This is quite in the Greek taste: About a third of the Odes of Anacreon are addressed Εις σεαυτον. Catullus here playfully, yet feelingly, remonstrates with himself, for still pursuing his inconstant Lesbia, by whom he had been forsaken.

9. *Ad Verannium*. This is one of the most pleasing of the shorter poems. Catullus congratulates his friend Verannius on his return from Spain, and expresses his joy in terms more touching and

natural than anything in the 12th Satire of Juvenal, or the 36th Ode of the 1st Book of Horace, which were both written on similar occasions.

10. *De Varri Scorto*. Catullus gives an account of a visit which he paid at the house of a courtezan, along with his friend Varrus, and relates, in a lively manner, the conversation which he had with the lady on the subject of the acquisitions made by him in Bithynia, from which he had lately returned. There seems here a hit to have been intended against Cæsar, of whose conduct in that country some scandalous anecdotes were afloat. The epigram, however, appears chiefly directed against those cross-examiners, who are not to be put off with indefinite answers, and in whose company one must be constantly on guard. In fact, the lady detects Catullus making an unfounded boast of his Bithynian acquisitions, and he accordingly exclaims,

"Sed tu insulsa male, et molesta vivis,
Per quam non licet esse negligentem."

11. *Ad Furium et Aurelium*. This ode commences in a higher tone of poetry than any of the preceding. Catullus addresses his friends, Furius and Aurelius, who, he is confident, would be ready to accompany him to the most remote and barbarous quarters of the globe—

"Furi et Aureli, comites Catulli,
Sive in extremos penetrabit Indos,
Littus ut longe resonante Eoà
Tunditur undâ."

This verse was no doubt in the view of Horace, in the sixth Ode of the second Book, where he addresses his friend Septimius, and adopts the elegant and melodious Sapphic stanza employed by Catullus—

[pg 284]

"Septimi, Gades aditure mecum, et
Cantabrum indoctum juga ferre nostra, et
Barbaras Syrtes, ubi Maura semper
Æstuat unda."

Horace, however, has closed his ode with a few lines, perhaps the most beautiful and tender in the whole circle of Latin poetry, and which strike us the more, as pathos is not that poet's peculiar excellence—

"Ille te mecum locus et beati," &c.

Catullus, on the other hand, after preserving an elevated strain of poetry for four stanzas, concludes with requesting his friends to deliver a ridiculous message to his mistress, who

"Nec meum respectet, ut ante, amorem,
Qui illius culpa cecidit; velut prati
Ultimi flos, prætereunte postquam
Tactus aratro est."

This last most beautiful image has been imitated by various poets. Virgil has not disdained to transfer it to his Æneid—

"Purpureus veluti cum flos succisus aratro
Languescit moriens[480]."

Fracastoro has employed the same metaphor with hardly less elegance in his consolatory epistle to Turri, on the loss of his child—

—— "Jacet ille velut succisus aratro
Flos tener, et frustra non audit tanta gementem;"

and Ariosto has introduced it in the eighteenth canto of the Orlando—

"Come purpureo fior languendo muore
Che 'l vomere al passar tagliato lassa."

13. *Ad Fabullum*. Our poet invites Fabullus to supper, on condition that he will bring his provisions along with him—

—— "Nam tui Catulli
Plenus sacculus est aranearum."

[pg 285]

On his own part, he promises only a hearty welcome, and the most exquisite ointments. In the poetry of social kindness and friendship, Catullus is eminently happy; and we regret to find that this tone, which has so much prevailed in the preceding odes, subsequently changes into bitter and gross invective.

The thirteen following poems are chiefly occupied with vehement and indelicate abuse of those friends of the poet, Furius and Aurelius, who were men of some quality and distinction, but had wasted their fortunes by extravagance and debauchery. In a former ode, we have seen him

confident that they would readily accompany him to the wildest or remotest quarters of the globe: But he had subsequently quarrelled with them, partly because they had stigmatized his verses as soft and effeminate; and, in revenge for this affront, he upbraids them with their poverty and vices. Of these thirteen poems, the last, addressed to Furius, is a striking picture of the sheltered situation of a villa. In the common editions, the description refers to the villa of Catullus himself, but Muretus thinks, it was rather meant to be applied to that of Furius:

"Furi, villula vostra non ad Austri," &c.

27. *Ad Pocillatorem puerum*. This address, in which Catullus calls on his cupbearer to pour out for him copious and unmixed libations of Falernian, is quite in the spirit of Anacreon: it breathes all his easy and joyous gaiety, and the enthusiasm inspired by the grape.

28. *Ad Verannium et Fabullum*—

"Pisonis comites cohors inanis," &c.

Catullus condoles with these friends on account of the little advantage they had reaped from accompanying the Prætor Piso to his province—comparing their situation to the similar circumstances in which he had himself been placed with Memmius in Bithynia.

There is a parody on this piece of Catullus by the celebrated Huet, Bishop of Avranches—

"Bocharti comites cohors inanis." &c.

In his youth, Huet had accompanied Bochart to Sweden, on the invitation of Queen Christina, and appears to have been as little gratified by his northern expedition, as Catullus by his voyage to Bithynia.

[pg 286] 29. *In Cæsarem*. Julius Cæsar, while yet but the general of the Roman republic, had been accustomed, during his stay in the north of Italy, to lodge at the house of the father of Catullus in Verona. Notwithstanding the intimacy which in consequence subsisted between Cæsar and his father, Catullus lampooned the former on more than one occasion. In the present epigram, he pours on him an unmeasured abuse, chiefly for having bestowed the plunder of Britain and Gaul on his favourite, the infamous Mamurra, who appropriated the public money, and the spoils of whole nations, to support his boundless extravagance. There is a story which has become very common on the authority of Suetonius, that Cæsar invited Catullus to supper on the day on which he first read some satirical verses of the poet against himself and Mamurra, and that he continued to lodge with his father as before[481]. It appears that on one occasion, when some scurrilous verses by Catullus were shown to him, he supped with Cicero at his villa near Puteoli. On the 19th, he staid at the house of Philippus till one in the afternoon, but saw nobody; he then walked on the shore across to Cicero's villa—bathed after two o'clock, and heard the verses on Mamurra read, at which he never changed countenance[482]. Now, this was in the year 708, after the civil war had been ended, by the defeat and death of the younger Pompey in Spain. It is most likely that this 29th epigram was the one which was read to him at Cicero's villa; and the 57th epigram, also directed against Cæsar and Mamurra, is probably that concerning which the above anecdote is related by Suetonius. Though it stands last of the two in the works of Catullus, it was evidently written before the 29th. He talks in it of Cæsar and Mamurra, as of persons who were still on a footing of equality—in the other, he speaks of their dividing the spoils of the provinces, Gaul, Britain, Pontus, and Spain. The coolness and indifference which Cæsar showed with regard to the first epigram written against him, and the forgiveness he extended to its author, encouraged Cicero, who was a gossip and newsmonger, or those who attended him, to read to him another of the same description while bathing at the Puteolan Villa.

31. *Ad Sirmionem Peninsulam*. This heart-soothing invocation, which is perhaps the most
[pg 287] pleasing of all the productions of Catullus, is addressed to the peninsula of Sirmio, in the territory of Verona, on which the principal and favourite villa of our poet was situated. Sirmio was a peninsular promontory, of about two miles circumference, projecting into the Benacus, now the Lago di Garda—a lake celebrated by Virgil as one of the noblest ornaments of Italy, and the praises of which have been loudly re-echoed by the modern Latin poets of that country, particularly by Fracastoro, who dwelt in its vicinity, and who, while lamenting the untimely death of his poetical friend, Marc Antonio del Torri, beautifully represents the shade of Catullus, as still nightly wandering amidst these favourite scenes—

"Te ripæ flevere Athesis; te voce vocare
Auditæ per noctem umbræ, manesque Catulli,
Et patrios mulcere novâ dulcedine lucos[483]."

Vestiges of the magnificent house supposed to have belonged to Catullus, are yet shown on this peninsula. Its ruins, which lie near the borders of the lake, still give the idea of an extensive palace. There are even now, as we are informed by travellers[484], sufficient remains of mason-work, pilasters, vaults, walls, and subterraneous passages, to assist the imagination in representing to itself what the building was when entire, at least in point of extent and situation. The length of the whole construction, from north to south, is about 700 feet, and the breadth upwards of 300. The ground on which it stood does not appear to have been level, and the fall to the west was supplied by rows of vaults, placed on each other, the top of which formed a terrace.

On the east, the structure had been raised on those steep and solid rocks which lined the shore; on the front, which was to the north, and commanded a magnificent view of the lake, an immense portico seems to have projected from the building: under the ruins, there are a number of subterraneous vaults, one of which ran through the middle of the edifice, and along its whole length[485].

The peninsula on which the villa of Catullus was situated, is not surpassed in beauty or fertility by any spot in Italy. “Sirmione,” says Eustace[486], “appears as an island, so low and so narrow is the bank that unites it to the mainland. The promontory spreads behind the town, and rises into a hill entirely covered with olives. Catullus,” he continues, “undoubtedly inhabited this spot, and
[pg 288] certainly he could not have chosen a more delightful retreat. In the centre of a magnificent lake, surrounded with scenery of the greatest variety and majesty, secluded from the world, yet beholding from his garden the villas of his Veronese friends, he might have enjoyed alternately the pleasures of retirement, and society; and daily, without the sacrifice of his connexions, which Horace seemed inclined to make in a moment of despondency, he might have contemplated the grandeur and agitation of the ocean, without its terrors and immensity. Besides, the soil is fertile, and its surface varied; sometimes shelving in a gentle declivity, at other times breaking in craggy magnificence, and thus furnishing every requisite for delightful walks and luxurious baths; while the views vary at every step, presenting rich coasts or barren mountains, sometimes confined to the cultivated scenes of the neighbouring shore, and at other times bewildered and lost in the windings of the lake, or in the recesses of the Alps. In short, more convenience and more beauty are seldom united[487].” No wonder, then, that Catullus, jaded and disappointed by his expedition to Bithynia, should, on his return, have exclaimed with transport, that the spot was not to be matched in the wide range of the world of waters; or that he should have unloaded his mind of its cares, in language so perfect, yet simple, that it could only have flowed from a real and exquisite feeling. No poem in the Latin language expresses tender feelings more tenderly, and home feelings more naturally, than the Invocation to Sirmio, in which the verses soothe and refresh us
[pg 289] somewhat in the manner we suppose Catullus himself to have been, by the trees that shaded the promontory, and by the waters of the lake below—

> “Quam te libenter, quamque lætus inviso!
> Vix me ipse credens Thyniam, atque Bithynos
> Liquisse campos, et videre te in tuto.
> O quid solutis est beatius curis?
> Cum mens onus reponit, ac peregrino
> Labore fessi venimus larem ad nostrum,
> Desideratoque acquiescimus lecto.
> Hoc est, quod unum est pro laboribus tantis.
> Salve, O venusta Sirmio, atque hero gaude.”

These lines show that the most refined and tender feelings were as familiar to the bosom of Catullus as the grossest. Nothing can be more delicate than his description of the emotions of one, who, after many wanderings and vicissitudes of fortune, returns to his home, and to the scenes beloved in youth or infancy: Nothing can be more beautiful than his invocation to the peninsula—his fond request that the delightful promontory, and the waters by which it was surrounded, should join in welcoming him home; and, above all, his heartfelt expression of delight at the prospect of again reclining on his accustomed couch.

It appears to me, however, that the beauty and the pathos of the poem is in some degree injured by the last verse,—

> “Ridete quicquid est domi cachinnorum,”

which introduces the idea of obstreperous mirth, instead of that tone of tenderness which pervades the preceding lines of the ode. One would almost suppose, as probably has happened in some other cases, that a verse had been subjoined to this which properly belonged to a different ode, where mirth, and not tenderness, prevailed.

The modern Latin poets of Italy frequently apostrophize their favourite villas, in imitation of the address to Sirmio. Flaminius, in a poem, *Ad Agellum suum*, has described his attachment to his farm and home, and the first lines of it rival the tender and pleasing invocation of Catullus. Some of the subsequent lines are written in close imitation of the Roman poet—

> —— “Jam libebit in cubiculo
> Molles inire somnulos.
> Gaudete, fontes rivulique limpidi.”

[pg 290] As also the whole of his address to the same villa, commencing—

> “Umbræ frigidulæ, arborum susurri.”

One of the most pleasing features in the works of the modern Latin poets of Italy, is the descriptions of their villas, their regret at leaving them, or their invitations to friends to come and witness their happiness. Hence Fracastoro’s villa, in the vicinity of Verona, Ambra, and *Pulcherrima Mergellina*, are now almost esteemed classic spots, like Tusculum or Tibur.

The invocation to the peninsula of Sirmio was evidently written soon after the return of Catullus from Bithynia; and his next poem worth noticing is a similar address to his villa near Tibur. The thought, however, in this poem, is very forced and poor. Catullus having been invited by his friend Sextius, according to a common custom at Rome, to be one of a party assembled at his house for the purpose of hearing an oration composed by their host, had contracted such a cold from its frigidity, that he was obliged to leave Rome, and retire to this seat, in order to recover from its effects. For his speedy restoration to health, he now gives thanks to his salubrious villa. This residence was situated on the confines of the ancient Latian and Sabine territories, and the villas there, as we learn from this ode, were sometimes called Tiburtine, from the town of Tibur, and sometimes Sabine, from the district where they lay; but the former appellation, it seems, was greatly preferred by Catullus. As long as the odes of Horace survive, the

> “Domus Albuneæ resonantis,
> Et præceps Anio, et Tiburni lucus, et uda
> Mobilibus pomaria rivis,”

will be remembered as forming one of the most delightful retreats in Italy, and one which was so agreeable to its poet, that he wished that of all others it might be the shelter and refuge of his old age. From the present aspect of Tivoli, the charm of the villas at the ancient Tibur may be still appreciated. “We ascended,” says Eustace, “the high hill on which Tivoli stands, passing through groves of olives, till we reached the summit. This town, the Tibur of the ancients, stands in a delightful situation, sheltered by Monte Catillo, and a semicircular range of Sabine mountains, and commanding, on the other side, an extensive view over the Campagna, bounded by the sea, Rome, Mount Soracte, and the pyramidal hills of Monticelli and Monte Rotondo, the ancient
[pg 291] Eretum. But the pride and ornament of Tivoli are still, as anciently, the falls and the windings of the Anio, now Teverone. This river having meandered from its source through the vales of Sabina, glides gently through Tivoli, till, coming to the brink of a rock, it precipitates itself in one mass down the steep, and then boiling for an instant in its narrow channel, rushes headlong through a chasm in the rock into the caverns below.* * * To enjoy the scenery to advantage, the traveller must cross the bridge, and follow the road which runs at the foot of the classic Monte Catillo, and winds along the banks of the Anio. As he advances he will have on his left the steep banks covered with trees, shrubs, and gardens, and on his right the bold but varying swells of the hills shaded with groves of olives. These sunny declivities were anciently interspersed with splendid villas, the favourite abodes of the most luxurious and refined Romans. They are now replaced by two solitary convents, but their site, often conjectural or traditionary, is sometimes marked by scanty vestiges of ruins, and now and then by the more probable resemblance of a name[488].” Eustace does not particularly mention the farm or villa of Catullus. In the travels, however, which pass under the name of M. Blainville, written in the beginning of last century, we are informed, that a monastery of the religious order of Mount Olivet was then established on the spot where formerly stood the Tiburtine villa of Catullus[489]. M. de Castellan fixes on the same spot, on account of its situation between the Sabine and Tiburtine territory. “D’ailleurs,” continues he, “il n’est pas d’endroit plus retiré, mieux garanti des vents, que cet angle rentrant de la vallée, entouré de tous côtes par de hautes montagnes; ce qui est encore un des caracteres du local choisi par notre poëte, qui pretendoit y être à l’abri de tout autre vent que de celui qui l’expose à la vengeance de sa maitresse[490].” It would appear from Forsyth’s Travels, that a spot is still fixed on as the site of the residence of Catullus. “The villa of Catullus,” he says, “is easily ascertained by his own minute description of the place, by excavated marbles, and by the popular name of Truglia.” This spot, which is close to the church of St Angelo in Piavola, is on the opposite side of the Anio from Tibur, about a mile north from that town, and on the north side of Monte Catillo, or what might be called the back of that hill, in reference to the situation of Tibur.
[pg 292] The Anio divides the ancient Latian from the Sabine territory, and the villa of Catullus was on the Sabine side of the river, but was called Tiburtine from the vicinity of Tibur[491].

The Romans, and particularly the Roman poets, as if the rustic spirit of their Italian ancestry was not altogether banished by the buildings of Rome, appear to have had a genuine and exquisite relish for the delights of the country. This feeling was not inspired by fondness for field-sports, since, although habituated to violent exercises, the chase never was a favourite amusement among the Romans, and they preferred seeing wild animals baited in the amphitheatre, to hunting them down in their native forests. The country then was not relished as we are apt to enjoy it, for the sake of exercise or rural pastimes, but solely for its amenity and repose, and the mental tranquillity which it diffused. With them it seems to have been truely,

> “The relish for the calm delight
> Of verdant vales and fountains bright;
> Trees that nod on sloping hills,
> And caves that echo tinkling rills.”.

[pg 293] Love of the country among the Romans thus became conjoined with the idea of a life of pastoral tranquillity and retirement,—a life of friendship, liberty, and repose,—free from labour and care, and all turbulent passions. Scenes of this kind delight and interest us supremely, whether they be painted as what is desired or what is enjoyed. We feel how natural it is for a mind with a certain disposition to relaxation and indolence, when fatigued with the bustle of life, to long for security and quiet, and for those sequestered scenes in which they can be most exquisitely enjoyed. There is much less of this in the writings of the Greeks, who were originally a sea-faring and piratical, and not, like the Italians, a pastoral people. It is thus that, even in their highest state of

refinement, the manners and feelings of nations bear some affinity to their original rudeness, though that rudeness itself has been imperceptibly converted into a source of elegance and ornament.

34. *Seculare carmen ad Dianam*. This is the first strictly lyric production of Catullus which occurs, and there are only three other poems of a similar class. In Greece, the public games afforded a noble occasion for the display of lyric poetry, and the sensibility of the Greeks fitted them to follow its highest flights. But it was not so among the Romans. They had no solemn festivals of assembled states: Their active and ambitious life deadened them to the emotions which lyric poetry should excite; and the gods, whose praises form the noblest themes of the Æolian lyre, were with them rather the creatures of state policy, than of feeling or imagination.

45. *De Acme et Septimio*. Here our poet details the mutual blandishments and amorous expressions of Acme and Septimius, with the approbation bestowed on them by Cupid. This amatory effusion has been freely translated by Cowley:—

> “Whilst on Septimius’ panting breast.
> Meaning nothing less than rest,” &c.

49. *Ad M. Tullium*. In this poem, which is addressed to Cicero as the most eloquent of the Romans, Catullus modestly returns the orator thanks for some service he had rendered him.

51. *Ad Lesbiam*. This is the translation of the celebrated ode of Sappho, which has been preserved to us by Longinus, Φαινεται μοι κηνος, &c. The fourth stanza of the original Greek has not been translated, but in its place a verse is inserted in all the editions of Catullus, containing a moral reflection, which one would hardly have expected from this dissolute poet:

> “Otium, Catulle, tibi molestum est:
> Otio exultas, nimiumque gestis;
> Otium reges prius et beatas
> Perdidit urbes.”

[pg 294] This stanza is so foreign from the spirit of high excitation in which the preceding part of the ode is written, that Maffei suspected it had belonged to some other poem of Catullus; and Handius, in his *Observationes Criticæ*, conjectures that the fourth stanza, which Catullus translated from the original Greek, having been lost, and a chasm being thus left, some idle librarian or scholiast of the middle ages had interpolated these four lines of misplaced morality, that no gap might appear in his manuscript[492]. It is not impossible, however, that this verse may have been intended to express the answer of the poet’s mistress.

Many amatory poets have tried to imitate this celebrated ode; but most of them have failed of success. Boileau has also attempted this far-famed fragment; but although he has produced an elegant enough poem, he has not expressed the vehement passion of the Greek original so happily as Catullus. How different are the rapidity and emotion of the following stanza,

> “Lingua sed torpet, tenuis sub artus
> Flamma dimanat, sonitu suopte
> Tintinant aures—gemina teguntur
> Lumina nocte,”

from the languor of the corresponding lines of the French poet!

> “Une nuage confus se repand sur ma vue,
> Je n’entend plus, je tombe en de douces langueurs,
> Et passe, sans haleine, interdite, perdue;
> Un frisson me saisit—je tremble, je me meurs.”

These lines give us little idea of that furious passion of which Longinus says the Greek ode expresses all the symptoms. Racine has been much more happy than Boileau in his imitation of Sappho. Phædra, in the celebrated French tragedy which bears the name of that victim of love, thus paints the effects of the passion with which she was struck at her first view of Hippolytus:—

> “Athènes me montra mon superbe ennemi:
> Je le vis, je rougis, je palis à sa vue—
> Un trouble s’eleva dans mon ame éperdue,
> Mes yeux ne voyoient plus, je ne pouvois parler;
> Je sentis tout mon cœur et transir et brûler[493].”

[pg 295] On this passage Voltaire remarks, “Peut on mieux imiter Sappho? Ces vers, quoique imites, coulent de source; chaque mot trouble les ames sensibles, et les penetre; ce n’est point une amplification: c’est le chef d’œuvre de la nature et de l’art[494].” A translation by De Lille, which has a very close resemblance to that of Boileau, is inserted in the delightful chapter of the *Voyage du Jeune Anacharsis*, which treats of Lesbos and Sappho. Philips, it is well known, attempted a version of the lyric stanzas of Sappho, which was first printed with vast commendation in the 229th Number of the Spectator, where Addison has also remarked, “that several of our countrymen, and Dryden in particular, seem very often to have copied after this ode of Sappho, in their dramatic writings, and in their poems upon love.”

58. *Ad Cœlium de Lesbia*. In this ode, addressed to one of her former admirers, Catullus gives an account, both tender and pathetic, of the debaucheries and degraded condition of Lesbia, to his passion for whom, he had attributed such powerful effects in the above imitation of Sappho.

61. *In Nuptias Juliæ et Manlii*. We come now to the three celebrated epithalamiums of Catullus. The first is in honour of the nuptials of Julia and Manlius, who is generally supposed to have been Aulus Manlius Torquatus, an intimate friend of the poet, and a descendant of one of the most noble patrician families in Rome. This poem has been entitled an Epithalamium in most of the ancient editions, but Muretus contends that this is an improper appellation, and that it should be inscribed *Carmen Nuptiale*. "An epithalamium," he says, "was supposed to be sung by the virgins when the bride had retired to the nuptial chamber, whereas in this poem an earlier part of the ceremony is celebrated and described." This earlier part, indeed, occupies the greater portion of the poem, but towards the conclusion the bride is represented as placed in the chamber of her husband, which may justify its ordinary title:

"Jam licet venias, Marite;
Uxor in thalamo est tibi," &c.

In this bridal song the poet first addresses Hymen; and as the bride was now about to proceed from her paternal mansion to the house of her husband, invokes his aid in raising the nuptial hymn. He then describes the bride:—

"Floridis velut enitens
Myrtus Asià ramulis;
[pg 296] Quos Hamadryades Deæ
Ludicrum sibi roscido
Nutriunt humore."

A similar image is frequent with other poets, and has been adopted by Pontanus[495] and Naugerius[496].

The praises of Hymen follow next:—

"Nil potest sine te Venus,
Fama quod bona comprobet,
Commodi capere: at potest
Te volente. Quis huic Deo
Compararier ausit?

Nulla quit sine te domus
Liberos dare, nec parens
Stirpe jungier: at potest
Te volente. Quis huic Deo
Compararier ausit?"

Claudian, in his epithalamium on the nuptials of Palladius and Celerina, and the German poet Lotichius, extol Hymen in terms similar to those employed in the first of the above stanzas: and the advantages he confers, alluded to in the second, have been beautifully touched on by Milton, as also by Pope, in his chorus of youths and virgins, forming part of the Duke of Buckingham's intended tragedy—*Brutus*:

"But Hymen's kinder flames unite,
And burn for ever one,
Chaste as cold Cynthia's virgin light,
Productive as the sun.

"O source of every social tye,
United wish and mutual joy,
What various joys on one attend!
As son, as father, brother, husband, friend."

Catullus now proceeds to describe the ceremonies with which the bride was conveyed to the house of her husband, and was there received. He feigns that he beholds the nuptial pomp and retinue approaching, and encourages the bride to come forth, by an elegant compliment to her beauty; as also, by reminding her of the fair fame and character of her intended husband. As she approaches, he intimates the freedom of the ancient Fescennine verses, which were first sung at marriage festivals.

The bride being at length conducted to her new habitation, the poet addresses the bridegroom,
[pg 297] and shuts up the married pair: But before concluding, in reference to Torquatus, one of the husband's names, he alludes, with exquisite delicacy and tenderness, to the most-wished-for consequence of this happy union:—

"Torquatus, volo, parvulus
Matris e gremio suæ
Porrigens teneras manus,
Dulce rideat ad patrem,

Semihiante labello.”

The above verse has been thus imitated in an Epithalamium on the marriage of Lord Spencer, by Sir William Jones, who pronounces it a picture worthy the pencil of Domenichino:

“And soon to be completely blest,
Soon may a young Torquatus rise,
Who, hanging on his mother’s breast,
To his known sire shall turn his eyes,
Outstretch his infant arms a while,
Half ope his little lips and smile.”

And thus by Leonard, in his pastoral romance of *Alexis*, where, however, he has omitted the *semihiante labello*, the finest feature in the picture:—

“Quel tableau! quand un jeune enfant,
Penché sur le sein de sa mère,
Avec un sourire innocent
Etendra ses mains vers son père.”

This nuptial hymn has been the model of many epithalamiums, particularly that of Jason and Creusa, sung by the chorus in Seneca’s *Medea*, and of Honorius and Maria, in Claudian. The modern Latin poets, particularly Justus Lipsius, have exercised themselves a great deal in this style of composition; and most of them with evident imitation of the work of Catullus. It has also been highly applauded by the commentators; and more than one critic has declared that it must have been written by the hands of Venus and the Graces—“Veneris et Gratiarum manibus scriptum esse.” I wish, however, they had excepted from their unqualified panegyrics the coarse imitation of the Fescennine poems, which leaves on our minds a stronger impression of the prevalence and extent of Roman vices, than any other passage in the Latin classics. Martial, and Catullus himself elsewhere, have branded their enemies; and Juvenal, in bursts of satiric indignation, has reproached his countrymen with the most shocking crimes. But here, in a
[pg 298] complimentary poem to a patron and intimate friend, these are jocularly alluded to as the venial indulgences of his earliest youth.

62. *Carmen Nuptiale*. Some parts of this epithalamium have been taken from Theocritus, particularly from his eighteenth Idyl, where the Lacedæmonian maids, companions of Helen, sing before the bridal-chamber of Menelaus[497]. This second nuptial hymn of Catullus may be regarded as a continuation of the above poem, being also in honour of the marriage of Manlius and Julia. The stanzas of the former were supposed to be sung or recited in the person of the poet, who only exhorted the chorus of youths and virgins to commence the nuptial strain. But here these bands contend, in alternate verses; the maids descanting on the beauty and advantages of a single life, and the lads on those of marriage.

The young men, companions of the bridegroom, are supposed to have left him at the rising of the evening star of love:—

—— “Vesper Olympo
Expectata diu vix tandem lumina tollit.
* * * * *
Hespere, qui cœlo lucet jucundior ignis?”

These lines appear to have been imitated by Spenser in his Epithalamium—

“Ah! when will this long weary day have done!
Long though it be, at last I see it gloom,
And the bright evening star, with golden crest,
Appear out of the east;
Fair child of beauty, glorious lamp of love,
How cheerfully thou lookest from above!”

The maids who had accompanied the bride to her husband’s house, approached the youths who had just left the bridegroom, and they commence a very elegant contention concerning the merits of the star, which the chorus of virgins is pleased to characterize as a cruel planet. They are silenced, however, by the youths hinting that they are not such enemies to Hesper as they pretend to be. Then the maids, draw a beautiful, and, with Catullus, a favourite comparison between an unblemished virgin, and a delicate flower in a garden:

“Ut flos in septis secretus nascitur hortis,
Ignotus pecori, nullo convulsus aratro,
Quem mulcent auræ, firmat sol, educat imber;
[pg 299] Multi illum pueri, multæ optavere puellæ.
Idem cum tenui carptus defloruit ungui,
Nulli illum pueri, nullæ optavere puellæ.
Sic virgo dum intacta manet, tum cara suis; sed
Cum castum amisit, polluto corpore, florem,
Nec pueris jucunda manet, nec cara puellis.”

To the sentiment delineated by this image, the youths reply by one scarcely less beautiful, emblematical of the happiness of the married state; and as this was a theme in which the maidens were probably not unwilling to be overcome, they unite in the last stanza with the chorus of young men, in recommending to the bride to act the part of a submissive spouse.

Few passages in Latin poetry have been more frequently imitated, and none more deservedly, than the above-quoted verses of Catullus, who certainly excels almost all other writers, in the beauty and propriety of his similes. The greatest poets have not disdained to transplant this exquisite flower of song. Perhaps the most successful imitation is one by the Prince of the romantic bards of Italy, in the first canto of his *Orlando*, and which it may be amusing to compare with the original:

"La Verginella è simile alla rosa,
Che in bel giardin su la nativa spina,
Mentre sola, e sicura si riposa,
Nè gregge, nè pastor se le avvicina;
L'aura soave, e l'alba rugiadosa,
L'acqua, la terra al suo favor s'inchina:
Giovini vaghi, e donne innamorate,
Amano averne e seni, e tempie ornate.

Ma non si tosto dal materno stelo
Rimossa viene, e dal suo ceppo verde;
Che quanto avea dagli uomini, e dal cielo,
Favor, grazia, e bellezza tutto perde.
La vergine, che il fior, di che più zelo,
Che de begli occhi, e della vita, aver dè,
Lascia altrui corre, il pregio, ch'avea dinanti,
Perde nel cor de tutti gli altri amanti."

The reader may perhaps like to see how this theme has been managed by an old *French* poet nearly contemporary with Ariosto:

"La jeune vierge est semblable à la rose,
Au beau jardin, sur l'épine native,
Tandis que sûre et seulette repose,
Sans que troupeau ni berger y arrive;
L'air doux l'échauffe, et l'Aurore l'arrose,
La terre, l'eau par sa faveur l'avive;
Mais jeunes gens et dames amoureuses,
[pg 300] De la cueillir ont les mains envieuses;
La terre et l'air, qui la soulaient nourrir,
La quittent lors et la laissent flétrir[498]."

It is evident that Ariosto has suggested several things to the French poet, as he has also done to the imitators in our own language, in which the simile has been frequently attempted, but not with much success. Ben Jonson has translated it miserably, substituting doggerel verse for the sweet flow of the Latin poetry, and verbal antithesis and conceit for that beautiful simplicity of idea which forms the chief charm of the original:

"Look how a flower that close in closes grows,
Hid from rude cattle, bruised by no plows," &c.

One of the best of the numerous English imitations is that in the *Lay of Iolante*, introduced in Bland's *Four Slaves of Cythera*:

"A tender maid is like a flow'ret sweet,
Within the covert of a garden born;
Nor flock nor hind disturb the calm retreat,
But on the parent stalk it blooms untorn,
Refresh'd by vernal rains and gentle heat,
The balm of evening, and the dews of morn:
Youths and enamoured maidens vie to wear
This flower—their bosoms grace, or twined around their hair.

"No sooner gathered from the vernal bough,
Where fresh and blooming to the sight it grew.
Than all who marked its opening beauty blow,
Forsake the tainted sweet, and faded hue.
And she who yields, forgetful of her vow,
To one but newly loved, another's due,
Shall live, though high for heavenly beauty prized,
By youths unhonoured, and by maids despised."

One of the lines in the passage of Catullus,

"Multi illum pueri—multæ optavere puellæ,"

and its converse,

"Nulli illum pueri—nullæ optavere puellæ,"

have been copied by Ovid in his *Metamorphoses*[499], and applied to Narcissus,

"Multi illum pueri, multæ cupiere puellæ.
Sed fuit in tenerâ tam dura superbia formâ,
Nulli illum juvenes, nullæ tetigere puellæ."

[pg 301] The origin of the line,

"Nec pueris jucunda manet, nec cara puellis,"

may be traced to a fragment of the Greek poet Mimnermus:

"Ἀλλ' ἐχθρος μεν παισιν, ατιμαστος δε γυναιξιν."

63. *De Ati*.—The story of Atis is one of the most mysterious of the mythological emblems. The fable was explained by Porphyry; and the Emperor Julian afterwards invented and published an allegory of this mystic tale. According to them, the voluntary emasculation of Atis was typical of the revolution of the sun between the tropics, or the separation of the human soul from vice and error. In the literal acceptation in which it is presented by Catullus, the fable seems an unpromising and rather a peculiar subject for poetry: indeed, there is no example of a similar event being celebrated in verse, except the various poems on the fate of Abelard. It is likewise the only specimen we have in Latin of the Galliambic measure; so called, because sung by Galli, the effeminate votaries of Cybele. The Romans, being a more sober and severe people than the Greeks, gave less encouragement than they to the celebration of the rites of Bacchus, and have poured forth but few dithyrambic lines. The genius of their language and of their usual style of poetry, as well as their own practical and imitative character, were unfavourable to the composition of such bold, figurative, and discursive strains. They have left no verses which can be strictly called dithyrambic, except, perhaps, the nineteenth ode of the second book of Horace, and a chorus in the *Œdipus* of Seneca. If not perfectly dithyrambic, the numbers of the *Atis* of Catullus are, however, strongly expressive of distraction and enthusiasm. The violent bursts of passion are admirably aided by the irresistible torrent of words, and by the cadence of a measure powerfully denoting mental agony and remorse. In this production, now unexampled in every sense of the word, Catullus is no longer the light agreeable poet, who counted the kisses of his mistress, and called on the Cupids to lament her sparrow. His ideas are full of fire, and his language of wildness: He pours forth his thoughts with an energy, rapidity, and enthusiasm, so different from his usual tone, and, indeed, from that of all Latin poets, that this production has been supposed to be a translation from some ancient Greek dithyrambic, of which it breathes all the passion and poetic phrensy. The employment of long compound epithets, which constantly recur in the *Atis*,—

[pg 302] "Ubi cerva sylvicultrix, ubi aper nemorivagus," ——

is also a strong mark of imitation of the Greek dithyrambics; it being supposed, that such sonorous and new-invented words were most befitting intoxication or religious enthusiasm[500]. Anacreon, in his thirteenth ode, alludes to the lamentations and transports of Atis, as to a well-known poetical tradition:

"Ὅι μεν καλην Κυβηβην
Τον ἡμιθηλυν Ἄττιν
Ἐν ὀυρεσιν βοωντα,
Λεγουσιν ἑκμανηναι."

Atis, it appears from the poem of Catullus, was a beautiful youth, probably of Greece, who, forsaking his home and parents, sailed with a few companions to Phrygia, and, having landed, hurried to the grove consecrated to the great goddess Cybele,—

"Adiitque opaca sylvis redimita loca Deæ,"

There, struck with superstitious phrensy, he qualified himself for the service of that divinity; and, snatching the musical instruments used in her worship, he exhorted his companions, who had followed his example, to ascend to the temple of Cybele. At this part of the poem, we follow the new votary of the Phrygian goddess through all his wild traversing of woods and mountains, till at length, having reached the temple, Atis and his companions drop asleep, exhausted by fatigue and mental distraction. Being tranquillized in some measure by a night's repose, Atis becomes sensible of the misery of his situation; and, struck with horror at his rash deed, he returns to the sea-shore. There he casts his eyes, bathed in tears, over the ocean homeward; and comparing his former happiness with his present wretched condition, he pours forth a complaint unrivalled in energy and pathos. Gibbon talks of the different emotions produced by the transition of Atis from the wildest enthusiasm to sober pathetic complaint for his irretrievable loss[501]; but, in fact, his complaint is not soberly pathetic—to which the Galliambic measure would be little suited: it is, on the contrary, the most impassioned expression of mental agony and bitter regret in the wide

compass of Roman literature:

[pg 303]

“Abero foro, palæstrâ, stadio et gymnasiis?
Miser, ah miser! querendum est etiam atque etiam, anime:
Ego puber, ego adolescens, ego ephebus, ego puer;
Ego gymnasii fui flos, ego eram decus olei;
Mihi januæ frequentes, mihi limina tepida,
Mihi floridis corollis redimita domus erat,
Linquendum ubi esset, orto mihi Sole, cubiculum.
Egone Deûm ministra et Cybeles famula ferar?
Ego Mænas, ego mei pars, ego vir sterilis ero?
Ego viridis algida Idæ nive amicta loca colam?
Ego vitam agam sub altis Phrygiæ columinibus,
Ubi cerva sylvicultrix, ubi aper nemorivagus?
Jam jam dolet quod egi, jam jamque pœnitet.”

One is vexed, that the conclusion of this splendid production should be so puerile. Cybele, dreading the defection and escape of her newly acquired votary, lets loose a lion, which drives him back to her groves,—

“Ubi semper omne vitæ spatium famula fuit.”

Muretus attempted a Latin Galliambic Address to Bacchus in imitation of the measure employed in the *Atis* of Catullus, and he has strenuously tried to make his poem resemble its model by an affected use of uncouth compound epithets. Pigna, an Italian poet, has adopted similar numbers in a Latin poem, on the metamorphosis of the water nymph, Pitys, who was changed into a fir-tree, for having fled from the embraces of Boreas. In many of the lines he has closely followed Catullus; but it seems scarcely possible that any modern poet could excite in his mind the enthusiasm essential for the production of such works. Catullus probably believed as little in Atis and Cybele as Muretus, but he lived among men who did; and though his opinions might not be influenced, his imagination was tinged with the colours of the age.

Atis is the name of one of the tragic operas of Quinault, which, I believe, was the most popular of his pieces except *Armide*; but it has little reference to the classic story of the votary of Cybele. The French Atis is a vehement and powerful lover, who elopes with the nymph Sangaride on the wings of the Zephyrs, which had been placed by Cybele, who was herself enamoured of the youth, at the disposal of Atis. It seems a poor production in itself, (how different from the operas of Metastasio!) but it was embellished by splendid scenery, and the music of Lulli, adapted to the chorus of Phrygians, and Zephyrs, and Dreams, and Streams, and Corybantes.

64. *Epithalamium Pelei et Thetidis*.—This is the longest and most elaborate of the productions of
[pg 304] Catullus. It displays much accurate description, as well as pathetic and impassioned incident. Catullus was a Greek scholar, and all his commentators seem determined that his best poems should be considered as of Greek invention. I do not believe, however, that the whole of this epithalamium was taken from any one poet of Greece, as the *Coma Berenices* was from Callimachus; but the author undoubtedly borrowed a great deal from various writers of that country. Hesiod wrote an Epithalamium, Ἐις Πηλεα και Θετιν[502], some fragments of which have been cited by Tzetzes, in his *prolegomena* to Lycophron’s *Cassandra*; and judging from these, it appears to have suggested several lines of the epithalamium of Catullus. The adornment, however, and propriety of its language, and the usual practice of Catullus in other productions, render it probable, that he has chiefly selected his beauties from the Alexandrian poets. Valckenar, in his edition of Theocritus, (1779,) has shown, that the Idyls of Theocritus, particularly the *Adoniazusi*, have been of much service to our Latin poet; and a late German commentator has pointed out more than twenty passages, in which he has not merely imitated, but actually translated, Apollonius Rhodius[503].

The proper subject of this epithalamium is the festivals held in Thessaly in honour of the nuptials of Peleus and Thetis; but it is chiefly occupied with a long episode, containing the story of Ariadne. It commences with the sailing of the ship Argo on the celebrated expedition to which that vessel has given name. The Nereids were so much struck with the unusual spectacle, that they all emerged from the deep; and Thetis, one of their number, fell in love with Peleus, who had accompanied the expedition, and who was instantly seized with a reciprocal passion. Little is said as to the manner in which the courtship was conducted, and the poet hastens to the preparations for the nuptials. On this joyful occasion, all the inhabitants of Thessaly flock to its capital, Pharsalia. Every thing in the royal palace is on a magnificent scale; but the poet chiefly describes the *stragula*, or coverlet, of the nuptial couch, on which was depicted the concluding part of the story of Theseus and Ariadne. Ariadne is represented as standing on the beach, where she had been abandoned, while asleep, by Theseus, and gazing in fixed despair at the departing sail of her false lover. Never was there a finer picture drawn of complete mental desolation. She was incapable of exhibiting violent signs of grief: She neither beats her bosom, nor bursts into tears; but the diadem which had compressed her locks—the light mantle which had floated around her
[pg 305] form—the veil which had covered her bosom—all neglected, and fallen at her feet, were the sport of the waves which dashed the strand, while she herself, regardless and stupified with horror at her frightful situation, stood like the motionless statue of a Bacchante,—

“Saxea ut effigies Bacchantis prospicit Evoe;

Non flavo retinens subtilem vertice mitram,
Non contecta levi velatum pectus amictu,
Non tereti strophio luctantes vincta papillas;
Omnia quæ toto delapsa e corpore passim
Ipsius ante pedes fluctus salis alludebant."

The above passage is thus imitated by the author of the elegant poem *Ciris*, which has been attributed to Virgil, and is not unworthy of his genius:

"Infelix virgo tota bacchatur in urbe:
Non styrace Idæo fragrantes picta capillos,
Cognita non teneris pedibus Sicyonia servans,
Non niveo retinens baccata monilia collo."—v. 167.

Catullus, leaving Ariadne in the attitude above described, recapitulates the incidents, by which she had been placed in this agonizing situation. He relates, in some excellent lines, the magnanimous enterprize of Theseus—his voyage, and arrival in Crete: He gives us a picture of the youthful innocence of Ariadne, reared in the bosom of her mother, like a myrtle springing up on the solitary banks of the Euphrates, or a flower whose blossom is brought forth by the breath of spring. The combat of Theseus with the Minotaur is but shortly and coldly described. It is obvious that the poet merely intended to raise our idea of the valour of Theseus, so far as to bestow interest and dignity on the passion of Ariadne, and to excuse her for sacrificing to its gratification all feelings of domestic duty and affection. Having yielded and accompanied her lover, she was deserted by him, in that forlorn situation, her deep sense of which had changed her to the likeness of a Bacchante sculptured in stone. Her first feelings of horror and astonishment had deprived her of the power of utterance; but she at length bursts into exclamations against the perfidy of men, and their breach of vows, which

—— "Cuncta aerii discerpunt irrita venti.
Jam jam nulla viro juranti femina credat,
Nulla viri speret sermones esse fideles:
Qui, dum aliquid cupiens animus prægestit apisci,
Nil metuunt jurare, nihil promittere parcunt.
Sed simul ac cupidæ mentis satiata libido est,
Dicta nihil metuêre, nihil perjuria curant."

[pg 306] This passage has been obviously imitated by Ariosto, in his *Orlando*—

"Donne, alcuna di voi mai più non sia
Che a parole d'amante abbia a dar fede.
L'amante per aver quel che desia,
Senza curar che Dio tutto ode e vede,
Avviluppa promesse, e giuramenti,
Che tutti spargon poi per l'aria i venti."

After indulging in such general reflections, Ariadne complains of the cruelty and ingratitude of Theseus in particular, whom she thus apostrophizes—

"Quænam te genuit solâ sub rupe leæna?
Quod mare conceptum spumantibus exspuit undis?
Quæ Syrtis, quæ Scylla, vorax quæ vasta Charybdis?"

These lines seem to have been suggested by the address of Patroclus to Achilles, near the commencement of the sixteenth book of the Iliad—

"—— Υ̓υκ αρα σοι γε πατηρ ἠν ἱπποτα Πηλευς,
Υ̓υδε Θετις μητηρ· γλαυκη δε σε τικτε Θαλασσα,
Πετραι δ' ἠλιβατοι, ὁτι τοι νεος ἐστιν απηνης."

Catullus, having put the expression of this idea in the mouth of a princess abandoned by her lover, it became a sort of *Formula* for deserted heroines among subsequent poets. Thus Ovid, in the eighth book of his *Metamorphoses*—

"Non genitrix Europa tibi est, sed inhospita Syrtis,
Armeniæ tigres, austroque agitata Charybdis;"

and thus Virgil makes Dido address Æneas—

"Nec tibi Diva parens, generis nec Dardanus auctor,
Perfide, sed duris genuit te cautibus horrens
Caucasus, Hyrcanæque admôrunt ubera tigres."

Tasso, who was a great imitator of the Latin poets, attributes, from the lips of Armida, a similar genealogy to Rinaldo—

"Nè te Sofia produsse, e non sei nato
Dell' Azzio sangue tu. Te l'onda insana

Del mar produsse, e 'l Caucaso gelato,
E le mamme allattar de tigre Ircana."

Boileau had happily enough parodied those rodomontades in the earlier editions of the *Lutrin*; but the passage has been omitted in all those subsequent to that of 1683—

[pg 307]

"Non, ton père à Paris ne fut point boulanger,
Et tu n'es point du sang de Gervais, l'horloger;
Ta mère ne fut point la maîtresse d'une coche:
Caucase dans ses flancs te forma d'une roche,
Une tigresse affreuse en quelque antre ecarté,
Te fit sucer son lait avec sa cruauté."

I do not think the circumstances in which Armida pours forth her reproaches are judiciously selected. The Ariadne of Catullus vents her complaints when her betrayer is beyond reach of hearing, and Dido, though in his presence, before he had taken his departure: But Armida runs after, and overtakes Rinaldo, in which there is something degrading. She expresses, however, more tenderness and amorous devotedness amid her revilings, than any of her predecessors—

"Struggi la fede nostra; anch'io t'affretto;
Che dico nostra? Ah non più mia: fedele
Sono a te solo, idolo mio crudele!"

When she has ended her complaints of the cruelty and ingratitude of Theseus, Ariadne expresses a very natural wish, that the ship Argo had never reached her native shores—

"Jupiter Omnipotens, utinam ne tempore primo
Gnosia Cecropiæ tetigissent littora puppes."

Thus, apparently, imitated by Virgil—

"Felix, heu nimium felix! si littora tantum
Nunquam Dardaniæ tetigissent nostra carinæ."

But both these passages, it is probable, were originally drawn from the beginning of the Medea of Euripides—

"Ἐιθ' οφελ' Αργους μη διαπτασθαι σκαφος
Κολχων ες αιαν κυανεας συμπληγαδας."

Catullus proceeds with a much closer imitation of Euripides—

"Nunc quo me referam? quali spe perdita nitar?
An patris auxilium sperem, quemne ipsa reliqui?"

which is almost translated from the Medea—

"Νυν ποι τραπωμαι; ποτερα προς πατρος δομους
Ὁυς σοι προδουσα και πατραν αφικομην."

[pg 308]

The grief and repentance of Ariadne are at length followed by a sense of personal danger and hardship; and her pathetic soliloquy terminates with execrations on the author of her misfortunes, to which—

"Annuit invicto cœlestûm numine rector;
Quo tunc et tellus, atque horrida contremuerunt
Æquora, concussitque micantia sidera mundus,"

an image probably derived from the celebrated description in the Iliad—Ἠ και κυανεησιν, &c. This promise of Jupiter was speedily accomplished, in the well-known and miserable fate of Ægeus, the father of Theseus.

We are naturally led to compare with Catullus, the efforts of his own countrymen, particularly those of Ovid and Virgil, in portraying the agonies of deserted nymphs and princesses. Both these poets have borrowed largely from their predecessor. Ovid has treated the subject of Ariadne not less than four times. In the epistle of Ariadne to Theseus, he has painted, like Catullus, her disordered person—her sense of desertion, and remembrance of the benefits she had conferred on Theseus: But the epistle is a cold production, chiefly because her grief is not immediately presented before us; and she merely tells that she had wept, and sighed, and raved. The minute detail, too, into which she enters, is inconsistent with her vehement passion. She recollects too well each heap of sand which retarded her steps, and the thorns on the summit of the mountain. Returning from her wanderings, she addresses her couch, of which she asks advice, till she becomes overpowered by apprehension for the wild beasts and marine monsters, of which she presents her false lover with a faithful catalogue. The simple ideas of Catullus are frequently converted into conceits, and his natural bursts of passion, into quibbles and artificial points. In the eighth book of the *Metamorphoses*, the melancholy part of Ariadne's story is only recalled, in order to introduce the transformation of her crown into a star. In the third book of the *Fasti*, she

deplores the double desertion of Theseus and Bacchus. It is in the first book of the *Art of Love*, that Ovid approaches nearest to Catullus, particularly in the sudden contrast between the solitude and melancholy of Ariadne, and the revelry of the Bacchanalians. Some of Virgil's imitations of Catullus have been already pointed out: But part of the complaint of Dido is addressed to her betrayer, and contains a bitterness of sarcasm, and eloquence of reproof, which neither Catullus nor Ovid could reach.

[pg 309] The desertion of Olimpia by Bireno, related in the tenth canto of the *Orlando Furioso*, has, in its incidents at least, a strong resemblance to the poem of Catullus. Bireno, Duke of Zealand, while on a voyage from Holland to his own country, touches on Frisia; and, being smit with love for Olimpia, daughter of the king, carries her off with him; but, in the farther progress of the voyage, he lands on a desert island, and, while Olimpia is asleep, he leaves her, and sets sail in the darkness of night. Olimpia awakes, and, finding herself alone, hurries to the beach, and then ascends a rock, whence she descries, by light of the moon, the departing sail of her lover. Here, and afterwards while in her tent, she pours forth her plaints against the treachery of Bireno. In the details of this story, Ariosto has chiefly copied from Ovid; but he has also availed himself of several passages in Catullus. As Ariosto, in his story of Olimpia, principally chose Ovid for his model, so Tasso, in that of Armida, seems chiefly to have kept his eye on Virgil and Catullus. But Armida is not like Ariadne, an injured and innocent maid, nor a stately queen, like Dido; but a voluptuous and artful magician,

—— "Che nella doglia amara
Gia tutte non obblia l'arte e le frodi."

It has been mentioned, that the desertion of Ariadne was represented on one compartment of the coverlet of the nuptial couch of Peleus—on another division of it the story of Bacchus and Ariadne was exhibited. The introduction of Bacchus and his train closes the episode with an animated picture, and forms a pleasing contrast to the melancholy scenes that precede it. At the same time, the poet, delicately breaking off without even hinting at the fair one's ready acceptance of her new lover, leaves the pity we feel for her abandonment unweakened on the mind.

65. *Ad Ortalum*. This is the first of the elegies of Catullus, and indeed the earliest of any length or celebrity which had hitherto appeared in the Latin language. Elegies were originally written by the Greeks in alternate hexameter and pentameter lines, "versibus impariter junctis." This measure, which was at first appropriated to deplore misfortunes, particularly the loss of friends, was soon employed to complain of unsuccessful love, and, by a very easy transition, to describe the delights of gratified passion:

—— "Querimonia primùm,
Post etiam inclusa est voti sententia compos."

[pg 310] Matters were in this state in the age of Mimnermus, who was contemporary with Solon, and was the most celebrated elegiac poet of the Greeks. Hence, from his time every poem in that measure, whatever was the subject, came to be denominated elegy. The mixed species of verse, however, was always considered essential, so that the complaint of Bion on the death of Adonis, or that of Moschus on the loss of Bion, is hardly accounted such, being written in a different sort of measure. In the strict acceptation of the term, scarcely any Greek elegy has descended to us entire, except perhaps a few lines by Callimachus on the death of Heraclitus.

This elegy of Catullus may be considered as a sort of introduction to that which follows it. Hortalus, to whom it is addressed, had requested him to translate from Callimachus the poem *De Coma Berenices*. He apologizes for the delay which had taken place in complying with the wishes of his friend, on account of the grief he had experienced from the premature death of his brother, for whom he bursts forth into this pathetic lamentation:—

"Nunquam ego te, vitâ frater amabilior,
Aspiciam posthac; at certe semper amabo,
Semper mœsta tuâ carmina morte canam;
Qualia sub densis ramorum concinit umbris
Daulias, absumpti fata gemens Ityli."

This simile is taken from the 19th book of the Odyssey—

"Ὡς δ' ὁτε Πανδαρεου κουρη, χλωρηις αηδων,
Καλον αειδησιν, έαρος νεον ἰσταμενοιο,
Δενδρεων ἐν πεταλοισιν καθεζομενη πυκινοισιν
Παιδ' ολοφυρομενη Ιτυλον φιλον,"

and it appears in turn to have been the foundation of Virgil's celebrated comparison:—

"Qualis populeâ mœrens Philomela sub umbrâ
Amissos queritur fœtus," &c.

This simile has been beautifully varied and adorned by Moschus[504] and Quintus Calaber[505], among the Greeks; and among the modern Italians by Petrarch, in his exquisite sonnet on the death of Laura:—

"Qual Rossignuol che si soave piagne," &c.

and by Naugerius, in his ode *Ad Auroram*,

"Nunc ab umbroso simul esculeto,
Daulias late queritur: querelas
Consonum circa nemus, et jocosa reddit imago."

[pg 311] 66. *De Coma Berenices*, is the poem alluded to in the former elegy: it is translated from a production of Callimachus, of which only two distichs remain, one preserved by Theon, a scholiast, on Aratus, and the other in the *Scholia* on Apollonius Rhodius[506].

Callimachus was esteemed by all antiquity as the finest elegiac poet of Greece, or at least as next in merit to Mimnermus. He belonged to the poetic school which flourished at Alexandria from the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus to that of Ptolemy Physcon, and which still sheds a lustre over the dynasty of the Lagides, in spite of the crimes and personal deformities with which their names have been sarcastically associated.

After the partition of the Greek empire among the successors of Alexander, the city to which he had given name became the capital of the literary world; and arts and learning long continued to be protected even by the most degenerate of the Ptolemies. But the school which subsisted at Alexandria was of a very different taste and description from that which had flourished at Athens in the age of Pericles. In Egypt the Greeks became a more learned, and perhaps a more philosophical people, than they had been in the days of their ancient glory at home; but they were no longer a nation, and with their freedom their whole strength of feeling, and peculiar tone of mind, were lost. Servitude and royal munificence, with the consequent spirit of flattery which crept in, and even the enormous library of Alexandria, were injurious to the elastic and native spring of poetic fancy. The Egyptian court was crowded with men of erudition, instead of such men of genius as had thronged the theatre and *Agora* of Athens. The courtly *literati*, the academicians, and the librarians of Alexandria, were distinguished as critics, grammarians, geographers, or geometricians. With them poetry became a matter of study, not of original genius or invention, and consequently never reached its highest flights. Though not without amenity and grace, they wanted that boldness, sublimity, and poetic enthusiasm by which the bards of the Greek republics were inspired. When, like Apollonius Rhodius, they attempted poetry of the highest class, they rose not above an elegant mediocrity; or when they attained perfection, as in the instance of Theocritus, it was in the inferior and more delicate branches of the art. Accordingly, these erudite and ornate poets chiefly selected as the subjects of their muse didactic
[pg 312] topics of astronomy and physics, or obscure traditions derived from ancient fable. Lycophron immersed himself in such a sea of fabulous learning, that he became nearly unintelligible, and all of them were marked with the blemishes of affectation and obscurity, into which learned poets are most apt to fall. Among the pleiad of Alexandrian poets, none had so many of the faults and beauties of the school to which he belonged as Callimachus. He was conspicuous for his profound knowledge of the ancient traditions of Greece, for his poetic art and elegant versification, but he was also noted for deficiency of invention and original genius:—

"Battiades semper toto cantabitur orbe,
Quamvis ingenio non valet, arte valet[507]."

The poem of Catullus has some faults, which may be fairly attributed to his pedantic model—a certain obscurity in point of diction, and that ostentatious display of erudition, which characterized the works of the Alexandrian poets. The Greek original, however, being lost, except two distichs, it is impossible to institute an accurate comparison; but the Latin appears to be considerably more diffuse than the Greek. One distich, which is still extant in the *Scholia* on Apollonius, has been expanded by Catullus into three lines; and the following preserved by Theon has been dilated into four:—

"Ἡ δε Κονων μ' ἐβλεψεν εν ῆερι τον Βερενικης
Βοστρυχον, ὀν κεινη πασιν ἐθηκε Θεοις[508]"

"Idem me ille Conon cœlesti lumine vidit
E Bereniceo vertice cæsariem,
Fulgentem clare; quam multis illa Deorum,
Lævia protendens brachia, pollicita est."

Here the three words τον Βερενικης βοστρυχον have been extended into "E Bereniceo vertice cæsariem fulgentem," and the single word ἐθηκε has formed a whole Latin line,

"Lævia protendens brachia, pollicita est[509]."

The Latin poem, like its Greek original, is in elegiac verse, and is supposed to be spoken by the constellation called *Coma Berenices*. It relates how Berenice, the queen and sister of Ptolemy,
[pg 313] (Euergetes,) vowed the consecration of her locks to the immortals, provided her husband was restored to her, safe and successful, from a military expedition on which he had proceeded against the Assyrians. The king having returned according to her wish, and her shorn locks having disappeared, it is supposed by one of those fictions which poetry alone can admit, that Zephyrus, the son of Aurora, and brother of Memnon, had carried them up to heaven, and thrown

them into the lap of Venus, by whom they were set in the sky, and were soon afterwards discovered among the constellations by Conon, a court astronomer. In order to relish this poem, or to enter into its spirit, we must read it imbued as it were with the belief and manners of the ancient Egyptians. The locks of Berenice might be allowed to speak and desire, because they had been converted into stars, which, by an ancient philosophic system, were supposed to be possessed of animation and intelligence. Similar honours had been conferred on the crown of Ariadne and the ship of Isis, and the belief in such transformations was at least of that popular or traditionary nature which fitted them for the purposes of poetry. The race, too, of the Egyptian Ptolemies, traced their lineage to Jupiter, which would doubtless facilitate the reception of the locks of Berenice among the heavenly orbs. Adulation, however, it must be confessed, could not be carried higher; the beautiful locks of Berenice, though metamorphosed into stars, are represented as regretting their former happy situation, and prefer adorning the brow of Berenice, to blazing by night in the front of heaven, under the steps of immortals, or reposing by day in the bosom of Tethys:—

"Non his tam lætor rebus, quam me abfore semper,
Abfore me a dominæ vertice discrucior."

But though the poem of Callimachus may have been seriously written, and gravely read by the court of Ptolemy, the lines of Catullus often approach to something like pleasantry or *persiflage*:

"Invita, O Regina, tuo de vertice cessi ...
Sed qui se ferro postulet esse parem?
Ille quoque eversus mons est, quem maximum in oris
Progenies Phthiæ clara supervehitur;
Quum Medi properare novum mare, quumque juventus
Per medium classi barbara navit Athon.
Quid facient crines, quum ferro talia cedant?"

These lines seem intended is a sort of mock-heroic, and remind us strongly of the *Rape of the Lock*:

[pg 314]

"Steel could the labours of the gods destroy,
And strike to dust the imperial towers of Troy;
Steel could the works of mortal pride confound,
And hew triumphal arches to the ground.
What wonder, then, fair nymph! thy hairs should feel
The conquering force of unresisted steel?"

The *Coma Earini* of Statius[510], is a poem of the same description as the *Coma Berenices*. It is written in a style of sufficiently elegant versification; but what in Callimachus is a courtly, though perhaps rather extravagant compliment, is in Statius a servile and disgusting adulation of the loathsome monster, whose vices he so disgracefully flattered. Antonio Sebastiani, a Latin poet of modern Italy, has imitated Catullus, by celebrating the locks of a princess of San-Severino. The beauty and virtues of his heroine had excited the admiration of earth, and the love of the gods, but with these the jealousy of the goddesses. By their influence, a malady evoked from Styx threatens the life of the princess, and occasions the loss of her hair. The gods, indignant at this base conspiracy, commission Iris to convey the fallen locks to the sky, and to restore to the princess, along with health, her former freshness and beauty.

68. *Ad Manlium*. The principal subject of this elegy, is the story of Laodamia: The best parts, however, are those lines in which the poet laments his brother, which are truly elegiac—

"Tu, mea, tu moriens, fregisti commoda, frater;
Tecum unà tota est nostra sepulta domus;
Omnia tecum unà perierunt gaudia nostra,
Quæ tuus in vita dulcis alebat amor:
Quojus ego interitu totâ de mente fugavi
Hæc studia, atque omnes delicias animi."

Catullus seems to have entertained a sincere affection for his brother, and to have deeply deplored his loss; hence he generally writes well when touching on this tender topic. Indeed, the only remaining elegy of Catullus worth mentioning, is that entitled *Inferiæ ad Fratris Tumulum*, which is another beautiful and affectionate tribute to the memory of this beloved youth. Vulpius had said, in a commentary on Catullus, that his brother died while accompanying him in his expedition with Memmius to Bithynia. This, however, is denied by Ginguené, who quotes two lines from the *Inferiæ*—

"Multas per gentes, et multa per æquora vectus,
Adveni has miseras, frater, ad inferias,"

[pg 315] in order to show that the poet was at a distance at the time of his brother's death, and celebration of his funeral rites. It is possible, however, that these lines may refer to some subsequent pilgrimage to his tomb, or, what is most probable, his brother may have died at Troy, while Catullus was in Bithynia.

None of the remaining poems of Catullus, though written in elegiac verse, are at all of the description to which we now give the name of elegy. They are usually termed epigrams, and contain the most violent invectives on living characters, for the vices in which they indulged, and satire the most unrestrained on their personal deformities; but few of them are epigrams in the modern acceptation of the word. An epigram, as is well known, was originally what we now call a device or inscription, and the term remained, though the thing itself was changed[511]. A Greek anthology consisting of poems which expressed a simple idea—a sentiment, regret, or wish, without point or double meaning, had been compiled by Meleager before the time of Catullus; and hence he had an opportunity of imitating the style of the Greek epigrams, and occasionally borrowing their expressions, though generally with application to some of his enemies at Rome, whom he wished to hold up to the derision or hatred of his countrymen. Most of these poems were called forth by real occurrences, and express, without disguise, his genuine feelings at the time: His contempt, dislike, and resentment, all burst out in poetry. So little is known concerning the circumstances of his life, or the history of his enmities or friendships, that some of the lighter productions of Catullus are nearly unintelligible, while others appear flat and obscure; and in none can we fully relish the felicity of expression or allusion.

These epigrams of Catullus are chiefly curious and valuable, when considered as occasional or extemporary productions, which paint the manners, as well as echo the tone of thought and feeling, which at the time prevailed in fashionable society at Rome. What chiefly obtrudes itself on our attention, is the gross personal invective, and indecency of these compositions, so foreign from anything that would be tolerated in modern times. The art of rendering others satisfied with themselves, and consequently with us—the practice of dissembling our feelings, at first to please, and then by habit,—the custom, if not of flattering our foes, at least of meeting those we dislike,
[pg 316] without reviling them, were talents unknown in the ancient republic of Rome. The freedom of the times was accompanied by a frankness and sincerity of language, which we would consider as rude. Even the best friends attacked each other in the Senate, and before the various tribunals of justice, in the harshest and most unmeasured terms of abuse. Philip of Macedon, in an amicable interview with the Roman general Flaminius, who was accounted the most polite man of his day, apologized for not having returned an immediate answer to some proposition which had been made to him, on the ground that none of those friends, with whom he was in the habit of consulting, were at hand when he received it; to which Flaminius replied, that the reason he had no friends near him was, that he had assassinated them all. Matters were little better in the days of Catullus. At the time he flourished, everything was made subservient to political advancement; and what *we* should consider as the most inexpiable offences, were forgotten, or at least forgiven, as soon as the interests of ambition required. Accordingly, no person seems to have blamed the bitter invectives of Catullus; and none of his contemporaries were surprised or shocked at the unbridled freedom with which he reviled his enemies. He was merely considered as availing himself of a privilege, which every one was entitled to exercise. In his days, ridicule and raillery were oftener directed by malice than by wit: But the Romans thought no terms unseemly, which expressed the utmost bitterness of private or political animosity, and an excess of malevolence was received as sufficient compensation for deficiency in liveliness or humour. As little were the Romans offended by the obscene images and expressions which Catullus so frequently employed. Such had not yet been proscribed in the conversation of the best company. “Among the ancients,” says Porson, in his review of Brunck’s *Aristophanes*[512], “plain speaking was the fashion; nor was that ceremonious delicacy introduced, which has taught men to abuse each other with the utmost politeness, and express the most indecent ideas in the most modest language. The ancients had little of this: They were accustomed to call a spade, a spade—to give everything its proper name. There is another sort of indecency which is infinitely more dangerous, which corrupts the heart without offending the ear.” Hence the Muse of light poetry thought not of having recourse to the circumlocutions or suggestions of modern times. Nor did Catullus suffer in his reputation, either as an author or man of fashion, from the impurities by
[pg 317] which his poems were poisoned. All this would have been less remarkable in the first age of Roman literature, as indelicacy of expression is characteristic of the early poetry of almost every nation. The French epigrams of Regnier, and his contemporaries Motin and Berthelot, are nearly as gross as those of Catullus; but at the close of the Roman republic, literature was far advanced; and if it be true, that as a nation grows corrupted its language becomes pure, the words and expressions of the Romans, in these last days of liberty, should have been sufficiently chaste. The obscenities of Catullus, however, it must be admitted, are oftener the sport of satire, than the ebullitions of a voluptuous imagination. His sarcastic account of the debaucheries of Lesbia, is more impure than the pictures of his enjoyment of her love.

No subject connected with the works of Catullus is more curious than the different sentiments, which, as we have seen, he expresses with regard to this woman. His conflict of mind breathes into his poetry every variety of passion. We behold him now transported with love, now reviling and despising her as sunk in the lowest abyss of shame, and yet, with this full knowledge of her abandoned character, her blandishments preserve undiminished sway over his affections. “At one time,” says a late translator of Catullus, “we find him upbraiding Lesbia bitterly with her licentiousness, then bidding her farewell for ever; then beseeching from the gods resolution to cast her off; then weakly confessing utter impotence of mind, and submission to hopeless slavery; then, in the epistle to Manlius, persuading himself, by reason and example, into a contented acquiescence in her falsehoods, and yet at last accepting with eagerness, and relying with hope, on her proffered vow of constancy. Nothing can be more genuine than the rapture with which he depicts his happiness in her hours of affection; nor than the gloomy despair with which he is overwhelmed, when he believes himself resolved to quit her for ever.” And all this, he wrote and

circulated concerning a Roman lady, belonging, it is believed, to one of the first and most powerful families of the state!

Lesbia, as formerly mentioned, is universally allowed to be Clodia, the sister of the turbulent Clodius; but there has been a great deal of discussion and dispute, with regard to the identity of the other individuals against whom the epigrams are directed. Justus Lipsius[513] has written a dissertation with regard to Vettius and Cominius. The former he supposes to be the person
[pg 318] mentioned in Cicero's Letters to Atticus, and by Suetonius, as having been suborned by Cæsar, to allow himself to be seized with a weapon on his person, and to confess that he had been employed by the Chiefs of the Senate to assassinate Pompey—a device contrived by Cæsar, in order to set Pompey and the Senate at variance. Cominius was an accuser by profession, and impeached C. Cornelius, whom Cicero defended[514]. Lipsius believes Alphenus to be Pompey, and thinks that the epigram, directed against him, is supposed to be written in the person of Cicero. He is of opinion that the poet durst not venture to mention Pompey's name, and therefore designed him by an assumed one; but the epigrams on Julius Cæsar prove that Catullus was neither so scrupulous nor timid. The greatest number, however, and the most cutting of the epigrams, are aimed at Gellius, his successful rival in the affections of Lesbia—

—— "Quem Lesbia malit,
Quam te cum totâ gente, Catulle, tuâ."

There were two persons of this name at Rome in the time of Catullus—an uncle and nephew. The first was a notorious profligate, who had wasted his patrimony, and afterwards headed mobs in the Forum for hire[515]. The nephew was equally dissolute. After the death of Cæsar, he conspired to assassinate Cassius in the midst of his army, and, having been pardoned, deserted to Antony. One of the various crimes of which he was suspected, identifies him as the Gellius branded by our poet, and whose vices were so great—

—— "Quantum non ultima Tethys,
Non genitor nympharum abluit Oceanus."

This idea, by the way, of crimes of such crimson dye that they cannot be washed out by the wide world of waters, seems to have been originally derived from some verses of the chorus in the Choephoræ of Æschylus—

—— "πορoι τε παντες ἐκ μιας ὁδου
Βαινοντες τον χαιρομυσου
Φονον καθαιροντες ἰουσαν ατην."

The great successor of Æschylus expressed the same idea, in different language, in the *Œdipus Tyrannus*—

"Ὀιμαι γαρ ὀυτ' αν Ιστρον ὀυτε Φασιν αν
Νιψαι καθαρμω τηνδε στεγην, ὀσα
Κευθει."

[pg 319] Seneca, imitating Catullus, in his *Hercules Furens*, says—

—— "Arctoum licet
Mæotis in me gelida transfundat mare,
Et tota Thetis per meas currat manus,
Hærebit altum facinus." ——

There is a remarkable resemblance betwixt this idea and a well-known passage in *Macbeth*:

"Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
Clean from my hand?" ——

Much dispute has existed with regard to the comparative merit of the epigrammatic productions of Catullus, and those of Martial, who sharpened the Latin epigram, and endeavoured to surprise, by terminating an ordinary thought with some word or expression, which formed a *point*. Of the three great triumvirs of Latin literature, Joseph Scaliger, Lipsius, and Muretus, the last considers Catullus as far superior to his successor, as the wit of a gentleman to that of a scoffer and buffoon, while the two former award the palm to Martial. Their respective merits are very well summed up by Vavassor.—"Catullum quidem, puro ac simplici candore, et nativa quadam, minimeque adscita, excellere venustate formæ, quæ accedat quam proxime ad Græcos. Martialem acumine, quod proprium Latinorum, et peculiare tunc fieri cœpit, valere; adeoque Catullum toto corpore epigrammatis esse conspicuum, Martialem clausula præcipue, atque ultimo fine, in quo relinquat, cum delectatione, aculeum spectari[516]."

There can, I think, be no doubt, that, as an epigrammatist, Martial is infinitely superior to Catullus; but it is not on his epigrams that the fame of Catullus rests: He owes his reputation to about a dozen pieces, in which every word, like a note of music, thrills on the heart-strings. It is this felicitous selection of the most appropriate and melodious expressions, which seem to flow from the heart without study or premeditation, which has rendered him the most *graceful* of poets:—

—— “Ce naif agrement,
Ce ton de cœur, ce negligé charmant,
Qui le rendit le poëte *des Graces*[517].”

Few poets, besides, have shown more freshness in their conceptions—more truth and nature in
[pg 320] their delineations of amatory passion—more heartfelt tenderness in grief—and none, certainly, ever possessed a more happy art of embellishing trivial incidents, by the manner in which he treated them. Indeed, the most exquisite of his productions, in point of grace and delicacy, are those which were called forth by the most trifling occasions; while, at the same time, his Epithalamium of Peleus and Thetis proves, that he was by no means deficient in that warmth of imagination, energy of thought, and sublimity of conception, which form the attributes of perfection in those bards who tread the higher paths of Parnassus. Catullus is a great favourite with all the early critics and commentators of the 16th century. The elder Scaliger alone has pronounced on him a harsh and unmerited sentence: “Catullo,” says he, “docti nomen quare sit ab antiquis attributum, neque apud alios comperi, neque dum in mentem venit mihi. Nihil enim non vulgare est in ejus libris: ejus autem syllabæ cùm duræ sint, tum ipse non raro durus; aliquando vero adeo mollis, ut fluat, neque consistat. Multa impudica, quorum pudet—multa languida, quorum miseret—multa coacta, quorum piget[518].” In conclusion, the reader may, perhaps, like to hear the opinion of the pure and saintly Fenelon, concerning this obscene pagan. —“Catulle, qu’on ne peut nommer sans avoir horreur de ses obscenitéz, est au comble de la perfection pour une simplicité passionnée—

‘Odi et amo: quare id faciam fortasse requiris.
Nescio; sed fieri sentio, et excrucior.’

Combien Ovide et Martial, avec leurs traits ingenieux et façonnéz, sont ils au dessous de ces paroles negligées, ou le cœur saisi parle seul dans un espéce de désespoir.”

The different sorts of poetry which Catullus, though not their inventor, first introduced at Rome, were cultivated and brought to high perfection by his countrymen. Horace followed, and excelled him in Lyric compositions. The elegiac measure was adopted with success by Ovid, Tibullus, and Propertius, and applied by them to the expression of amatory sentiments, which, if they did not reach the refinement, or pure devotedness of the middle ages[519], were less gross than those of Catullus.

[pg 321] In his epigrammatic compositions, Catullus was imitated by several of his own contemporaries, most of whom also ranked in the number of his friends. Their works, however, have almost entirely perished. Quintus Lutatius Catulus, who is praised as an orator and historian by Cicero[520], has left two epigrams—one, *Ad Theotimum*, translated from Callimachus, the name Theotimus being merely substituted for that of Cephissus—and the other, *Ad Roscium Puerum*, addressed to the celebrated actor in his youth, and quoted by Cicero in his treatise, *De Naturâ Deorum*[521]—

“Constiteram, exorientem Auroram forte salutans;
Cum subito a lævâ Roscius exoritur.
Pace mihi liceat, Cœlestes, dicere vestrâ;
Mortalis visus pulchrior esse deo[522].”

This epigram formed a theme and subject of poetical contest among the French *beaux esprits* of the 17th century, who vied with each other in sonnets and madrigals, entitled *La Belle Matineuse*, written in imitation of the above verses. One will suffice as a specimen—

La Belle Matineuse.

“Le silence régnait sur la terre et sur l’onde,
L’air devenait serein, et l’Olympe vermeil,
Et l’amoureux Zephyr affranchi du sommeil
Ressuscitait les fleurs d’une haleine féconde.
L’Aurore déployait l’or de sa tresse blonde,
Et semait de rubis le chemin du soleil.
Enfin ce Dieu venait au plus grand appareil,
Qu’il fût jamais venus pour éclairer le monde.
Quand la jeune Philis au visage riant,
Sortant de son palais, plus clair que l’Orient,
Fit voir une lumière et plus vive et plus belle.
Sacre flambeau de jour, n’en soyez point jaloux;
Vous parûtes alors aussi peu devant elle,
Que les feux de la nuit avoient fait devant vous.”

From a vast collection of Italian sonnets on the same subject, I select one by Annibal Caro, the celebrated translator of Virgil—

[pg 322] “Eran l’aer tranquillo, e l’onde chiare,
Sospirava Favonio, e fuggia Clori,
L’alma Ciprigna innanzi ai primi albori
Ridendo empia d’amor la terra e ’l mare.

“La rugiadosa Aurora in ciel più rare
Facea le stelle; e di più bei colori
Sparse le nubi, e i monti; uscia già fuori
Febo, qual più lucente in Delfo appare.

“Quando altra Aurora un più vezzoso ostello
Aperse, e lampeggiò sereno, e puro
Il Sol, che sol m’abbaglia, e mi disface.

“Volsimi, e ’n contro a lei mi parve oscuro,
(Santi lumi del ciel, con vostra pace)
L’Oriente, che dianzi era si bello.”

Licinius Calvus was equally distinguished as an orator and a poet. In the former capacity he is mentioned with distinction by Cicero; but it was probably his poetical talents that procured for him the friendship of Catullus, who has addressed to him two Odes, in which he is commemorated as a most delightful companion, from whose society he could scarcely refrain. Calvus was violently enamoured of a girl called Quintilia, whose early death he lamented in a number of verses, none of which have descended to us. There only remain, an epigram against Pompey, satirizing his practice of scratching his head with one finger, and a fragment of another against Julius Cæsar[523]. The sarcasm it contains would not have been pardonable in the present age; but the dictator, hearing that Calvus had repented of his petulance, and was desirous of a reconciliation, addressed a letter to him, with assurances of unaltered friendship[524]. The fragments of his epigrams which remain, do not enable us to judge for ourselves of his poetical merits. He is classed by Ovid among the licentious writers[525]; but he is generally mentioned along with Catullus, which shows that he was not considered as greatly inferior to his friend—

“Nil præter Calvum et doctus cantare Catullum.”

Pliny, in one of his letters, talking of his friend Pompeius Saturnius, mentions, that he had composed several poetical pieces in the manner of Calvus and Catullus[526]; and Augurinus, as quoted by Pliny in another of his epistles, says,

[pg 323]

“Canto carmina versibus minutis
His olim quibus et meus Catullus,
Et Calvus ——”[527]

VALERIUS ÆDITUUS,

Of Valerius Ædituus, another writer of epigrams and amorous verses in the time of Catullus, little is known; but the following lines by him, to a slave carrying a torch before him to the house of his mistress, have been quoted by Aulus Gellius—

“Quid faculam præfers, Phileros, qua nil opu’ nobis?
Ibimus, hoc lucet pectore flamma satis.
Istam nam potis est vis sæva extinguere venti,
Aut imber cœlo candidus præcipitans:
At contra, hunc ignem Veneris, nisi si Venus ipsa,
Nulla ’st quæ possit vis alia opprimere[528].”

Aulus Gellius has also preserved the following verses of Porcius Licinius—

“Custodes ovium, teneræque propaginis agnûm,
Quæris ignem?—Ite huc: quæritis? ignis homo est.
Si digito attigero, incendam silvam simul omnem,
Omne pecus: flamma ’st omnia quæ video[529].”

During the period in which the works of Lucretius and Catullus brought the Latin language to such perfection, the drama, which we have seen so highly elevated in the days of the Scipios, had sunk into a state of comparative degradation. National circumstances and manners had never been favourable to the progress of the dramatic art at Rome; but, subsequently to the conquest of Carthage, the increasing size and magnificence of the Roman theatres, some of which held not less than 60,000 people, required splendid spectacles, or extravagant buffoonery, to fill the eye, and catch the attention of a crowded, and often tumultuous assembly.

[pg 324]

Accordingly, in the long period from the termination of the Punic wars till the Augustan age, there scarcely appeared a single successor to Plautus or Pacuvius. That the pieces of the ancient tragic or comic writers still continued to be occasionally represented, is evident from the immense wealth amassed, in the time of Cicero, by Æsopus and Roscius, who never, so far as we know, condescended to appear, except in the regular drama; but a new tragedy or comedy was rarely brought out. This deficiency in the fund of entertainment and novelty, in the province of

the legitimate drama, was supplied by the MIMES, which now became fashionable in Rome.

Though resembling them in name, the Latin Mimes differed essentially from the Greek Μιμοι, from which they derived their appellation. The Greek Mimes, of which Sophron of Syracuse was the chief writer, represented a single adventure taken from ordinary life, and exhibited characters without any gross caricature or buffoonery. The fifteenth Idyl of Theocritus is said to be written in the manner of the Greek Mimes[530]; and, to judge from it, they were not so much actions as conversations with regard to some action which was supposed to be going on at the time, and is pointed out, as it were, by the one interlocutor to the other, or an imitation of the action, whence their name has been derived. They resembled detached or unconnected scenes of a comedy, and required no more gesticulation or mimetic art, than is employed in all dramatic representations. On the other hand, mimetic gestures of every species, except dancing, were essential to the Roman Mimes, as also the exhibition of grotesque characters, which had often no prototypes in real life. The Mimes of the Romans, again, differed from their pantomime in this, that, in the former, most of the gestures were accompanied by recitation, whereas the pantomimic entertainments, carried to such perfection by Pylades and Bathyllus, were *ballets*, often of a serious, and never of a ludicrous or grotesque description, in which everything was expressed by dumb show, and in which dancing constituted so considerable a part of the amusement, that the performers danced a poem, a chorus, or whole drama, (*Canticum saltabant.*)

It is much more difficult to distinguish the Mimes from the *Fabulæ Atellanæ*, than from the Pantomimes or Greek *Mimi*; and indeed they have been frequently confounded[531]. It appears, however, that the characters represented in the Atellane dramas were chiefly provincial, while
[pg 325] those introduced in the Mimes were the lowest class of citizens at Rome. Antic gestures, too, were more employed in the Mimes than the Atellane fables, and they were more obscene and ludicrous: "Toti," says Vossius, "erant ridiculi." The Atellanes, though full of mirth, were always tempered with something of the ancient Italian severity, and consisted of a more liberal and polite kind of humour than the Mimes. In this respect Cicero places the Mimes and Atellane fables in contrast, in a letter to Papyrius Pætus, where he says, that the broad jests in which his correspondent had indulged, immediately after having quoted the tragedy of Œnomaus, reminds him of the modern method of introducing, at the end of such graver dramatic pieces, the buffoonery of the Mimes, instead of the more delicate humour of the old Atellane farces[532].

These Mimes, (which, with the Atellane fables, and regular tragedy and comedy, form the four great branches of the Roman drama,) were represented by actors, who sometimes wore masks, but more frequently had their faces stained like our clowns or mountebanks. There was always one principal actor, on whom the jests and ridicule chiefly hinged. The second, or inferior parts, were entirely subservient to that of the first performer: They were merely introduced to set him off to advantage, to imitate his actions, and take up his words—

> "Sic iterat voces, et verba cadentia tollit;
> Ut puerum sævo credas dictata magistro
> Reddere, vel partes mimum tractare secundas."

Some writers have supposed, that a Mime was a sort of *monodrame*, and that the *partes secundæ*, here alluded to by Horace, meant the part of the actor who gesticulated[533], while the other declaimed, or that of the declaimer[534]. It is quite evident, however, from the context of the lines, that Horace refers to the inferior characters of the Mime[535]. I doubt not that the chief performer assumed more than one character in the course of the piece[536], in the manner in which the Admirable Crichton is recorded to have performed at the court of Mantua[537]; but there were also subordinate parts in the Mime—a fool or a parasite, who assisted in carrying on the jests or
[pg 326] tricks of his principal:—"C. Volumnius," says Festus, "qui ad tibicinem saltârit, secundarum partium fuerit, qui, fere omnibus Mimis, parasitus inducatur[538];" and to the same purpose Petronius Arbiter,—

> "Grex agit in scenâ Mimum—Pater ille vocatur,
> Filius hic, nomen Divitis ille tenet[539]."

The performance of a Mime commenced with the appearance of the chief actor, who explained its subject in a sort of prologue, in order that the spectators might fully understand what was but imperfectly represented by words or gestures. This prolocutor, also, was generally the author of a sketch of the piece; but the actors were not confined to the mere outline which he had furnished. In one view, the province of the mimetic actor was of a higher description than that of the regular comedian. He was obliged to trust not so much to memory as invention, and to clothe in extemporaneous effusions of his own, those rude sketches of dramatic scenes, which were all that were presented to him by his author. The performers of Mimes, however, too often gave full scope, not merely to natural unpremeditated gaiety, but abandoned themselves to every sort of extravagant and indecorous action. The part written out was in iambic verse, but the extemporary dialogue which filled up the scene was in prose, or in the rudest species of versification. Through the course of the exhibition, the want of refinement or dramatic interest was supplied by the excellence of the mimetic part, and the amusing imitation of the peculiarities or personal habits of various classes of society. The performers were seldom anxious to give a reasonable conclusion to their extravagant intrigue. Sometimes, when they could not extricate themselves from the embarrassment into which they had thrown each other, they simultaneously rushed off the stage, and the performance terminated[540].

The characters exhibited were parts taken from the dregs of the populace—courtezans, thieves, and drunkards. The Sannio, or Zany, seems to have been common to the Mimes and Atellane dramas. He excited laughter by lolling out his tongue, and making asses' ears on his head with his fingers. There was also the Panniculus, who appeared in a party-coloured dress, with his head
[pg 327] shaved, feigning stupidity or folly, and allowing blows to be inflicted on himself without cause or moderation. That women performed characters in these dramas, and were often the favourite mistresses of the great, is evident from a passage in the Satires of Horace, who mentions a female Mime, called Origo, on whom a wealthy Roman had lavished his paternal inheritance[541]. Cornelius Gallus wrote four books of *Elegies* in praise of a Mime called Cytheris, who, as Aurelius Victor informs us, was also beloved by Antony and Brutus—"Cytheridam Mimam, cum Antonio et Gallo, amavit Brutus." It appears from a passage in Valerius Maximus, that these Mimæ were often required to strip themselves of their clothes in presence of the spectators[542].

As might be expected from the characters introduced, the Mimes were appropriated to a representation of the lowest follies and debaucheries of the vulgar. "Argumenta," says Valerius Maximus, "majore ex parte, stuprorum continent actus." That they were in a great measure occupied with the tricks played by wives on their husbands, (somewhat, probably, in the style of those related by the Italian novelists,) we learn from Ovid; who, after complaining in his *Tristia* of having been undeservedly condemned for the freedom of his verses, asks—

"Quid si scripsissem Mimos obscœna jocantes?
Qui semper juncti crimen amoris habent;
In quibus assidue cultus procedit adulter,
Verbaque dat stulto callida nupta viro[543]."

We learn from another passage of Ovid that these were by much the most popular subjects,—

"Cumque fefellit amans aliquâ novitate maritum,
Plauditur, et magno palma favore datur."

The same poet elsewhere calls the Mimes, "Imitantes turpia Mimos;" and Diomedes defines them to be "Sermonis cujuslibet, motûsque, sine reverentiâ, vel factorum turpium cum lasciviâ imitatio, ita ut ridiculum faciant."

These Mimes were originally represented as a sort of afterpiece, or interlude to the regular dramas, and were intended to fill up the blank which had been left by omission of the Chorus. But they subsequently came to form a separate and fashionable public amusement, which in a great measure superseded all other dramatic entertainments. Sylla (in whom the gloomy temper of the tyrant was brightened by the talents of a mimic and a wit) was so fond of Mimes, that he gave the
[pg 328] actors of them many acres of the public land[544]; and we shall soon see the high importance which Julius Cæsar attached to this sort of spectacle. It appears, at first view, curious, that the Romans —the most grave, solid, and dignified nation on earth, the *gens togata*, and the *domini rerum*— should have been so partial to the exhibition of licentious buffoonery on the stage. But, perhaps, when people have a mind to divert themselves, they choose what is most different from their ordinary temper and habits, as being most likely to amuse them. "Strangely," says Isaac Bey, while relating his adventures in *France*, "was my poor Turkish brain puzzled, on discovering the favourite pastime of a nation reckoned the merriest in the world. It consisted in a thing called tragedies, whose only purpose is to make you cry your eyes out. Should the performance raise a single smile, the author is undone[545]."

The popularity and frequent repetition of the Mimes came gradually to purify their grossness; and the writers of them, at length, were not contented merely with the fame of amusing the Roman populace by ribaldry. They carried their pretensions higher; and, while they sometimes availed themselves of the licentious freedom to which this species of drama gave unlimited indulgence, they interspersed the most striking truths and beautiful moral maxims in these ludicrous and indecent farces. This appears from the Mimes of Decimus Laberius and Publius Syrus, who both flourished during the dictatorship of Julius Cæsar.

LABERIUS.

In earlier periods, as has been already mentioned, the writer was also the chief representer of the Mime. Laberius, however, was not originally an actor, but a Roman knight of respectable family and character, who occasionally amused himself with the composition of these farcical productions. He was at length requested by Julius Cæsar to appear on the stage after he had reached the age of sixty, and act the Mimes, which he had sketched or written[546]. Aware that the entreaties of a perpetual dictator are nearly equivalent to commands, he reluctantly complied; but in the prologue to the first piece which he acted, he complained bitterly to the audience of the degradation to which he had been subjected—

[pg 329] "Ego, bis trecenis annis actis, sine notâ,

Eques Romanus lare egressus meo,
Domum revertar Mimus. Nimirum hoc die
Uno plus vixi mihi, quàm vivendum fuit.
Fortuna, immoderata in bono æque atque in malo,
Si tibi erat libitum, literarum laudibus
Floris cacumen nostræ famæ frangere,
Cur cum vigebam membris præ viridantibus,
Satisfacere populo, et tali cum poteram viro,
Non flexibilem me concurvàsti ut caperes?
Nunc me quo dejicis? quid ad scenam affero,
Decorem formæ, an dignitatem corporis?
Animi virtutem, an vocis jucundæ sonum?
Ut hedera serpens vires arboreas necat;
Ita me vetustas amplexu annorum enecat[547].”

The whole prologue, consisting of twenty-nine lines, which have been preserved by Macrobius, is written in a fine vein of poetry, and with all the high spirit of a Roman citizen. It breathes in every verse the most bitter and indignant feelings of wounded pride, and highly exalts our opinion of the man, who, yielding to an irresistible power, preserved his dignity while performing a part which he despised. It is difficult to conceive how, in this frame of mind, he could assume the jocund and unrestrained gaiety of a Mime, or how the Roman people could relish so painful a spectacle. He is said, however, to have represented the feigned character with inimitable grace and spirit. But in the course of his performance he could not refrain from expressing strong sentiments of freedom and detestation of tyranny. In one of the scenes he personated a Syrian slave; and, while escaping from the lash of his master, he exclaimed,

“Porro, Quirites, libertatem perdidimus;”

and shortly after, he added,

[pg 330] “Necesse est multos timeat, quem multi timent,”

on which the whole audience turned their eyes to Cæsar, who was present in the theatre[548].

It was not merely to entertain the people, who would have been as well amused with the representation of any other actor; nor to wound the private feelings of Laberius, that Cæsar forced him on the stage. His sole object was to degrade the Roman knighthood, to subdue their spirit of independence and honour, and to strike the people with a sense of his unlimited sway. This policy formed part of the same system which afterwards led him to persuade a senator to combat among the ranks of gladiators. The practice introduced by Cæsar became frequent during the reigns of his successors; and in the time of Domitian, the Fabii and Mamerci acted as *planipedes*, the lowest class of buffoons, who, barefooted and smeared with soot, capered about the stage in the intervals of the play for the amusement of the rabble!

Though Laberius complied with the wishes of Cæsar, in exhibiting himself on the stage, and acquitted himself with ability as a mimetic actor, it would appear that the Dictator had been hurt and offended by the freedoms which he used in the course of the representation, and either on this or some subsequent occasion bestowed the dramatic crown on a Syrian slave, in preference to the Roman knight. Laberius submitted with good grace to this fresh humiliation; he pretended to regard it merely as the ordinary chance of theatric competition, as he expressed to the audience in the following lines:—

“Non possunt primi esse omnes omni in tempore.
Summum ad gradum cum claritatis veneris,
Consistes ægre: et citius quam ascendas, decides.
Cecidi ego—cadet qui sequitur[549].” ——

Laberius did not long survive this double mortification: he retired from Rome, and died at Puteoli about ten months after the assassination of Cæsar[550].

The titles and a few fragments of forty-three of the Mimes of Laberius are still extant; but, excepting the prologue, these remains are too inconsiderable and detached to enable us to judge of their subject or merits. It would appear that he occasionally dramatized the passing follies or
[pg 331] absurd occurrences of the day: for Cicero, writing to the lawyer Trebonius, who expected to accompany Cæsar from Gaul to Britain, tells him he had best return to Rome quickly, as a longer pursuit to no purpose would be so ridiculous a circumstance, that it would hardly escape the drollery of that arch fellow Laberius; and what a burlesque character, he continues, would a British lawyer furnish out for the Roman stage[551]! The only passage of sufficient length in connection to give us any idea of his manner, is a whimsical application of a story concerning the manner in which Democritus put out his eyes—

“Democritus Abderites, physicus philosophus,
Clypeum constituit contra exortum Hyperionis;
Oculos effodere ut posset splendore æreo.
Ita, radiis solis aciem effodit luminis,
Malis bene esse ne videret civibus.

Sic ego, fulgentis splendore pecuniæ,
Volo elucificare exitum ætatis meæ,
Ne in re bonâ esse videam nequam filium[552].”

According to Aulus Gellius, Laberius has taken too much license in inventing words; and that author also gives various examples of his use of obsolete expressions, or such as were employed only by the lowest dregs of the people[553]. Horace seems to have considered an admiration of the Mimes of Laberius as the consummation of critical folly[554]. I am far, however, from considering Horace as an infallible judge of true poetical excellence. He evidently attached more importance to correctness and terseness of style, than to originality of genius or fertility of invention. I am convinced he would not have admired Shakspeare: He would have considered Addison and Pope as much finer poets, and would have included Falstaff, and Autolycus, and Sir Toby Belch, the clowns and the boasters of our great dramatist, in the same censure which he bestows on the
[pg 332] *Plautinos sales* and the Mimes of Laberius. Probably, too, the freedom of the prologue, and other passages of his dramas, contributed to draw down the disapprobation of this Augustan critic, as it already had placed the dramatic wreath on the brow of

PUBLIUS SYRUS.

The celebrated Mime, called Publius Syrus, was brought from Asia to Italy in early youth, in the same vessel with his countryman and kinsman, Manlius Antiochus, the professor of astrology, and Staberius Eros, the grammarian, who all, by some desert in learning, rose above their original fortune. He received a good education and liberty from his master, in reward for his witticisms and facetious disposition. He first represented his Mimes in the provincial towns of Italy, whence, his fame having spread to Rome, he was summoned to the capital, to assist in those public spectacles which Cæsar afforded his countrymen, in exchange for their freedom[555]. On one occasion, he challenged all persons of his own profession to contend with him on the stage; and in this competition he successively overcame every one of his rivals. By his success in the representation of these popular entertainments, he amassed considerable wealth, and lived with such luxury, that he never gave a great supper without having sow’s udder at table—a dish which was prohibited by the censors, as being too great a luxury even for the table of patricians[556].

Nothing farther is known of his history, except that he was still continuing to perform his Mimes with applause at the period of the death of Laberius.

We have not the names of any of the Mimes of Publius; nor do we precisely know their nature or subject,—all that is preserved from them being a number of detached sentiments or maxims, to the number of 800 or 900, seldom exceeding a single line, but containing reflections of unrivalled force, truth, and beauty, on all the various relations, situations, and feelings of human life—friendship, love, fortune, pride, adversity, avarice, generosity. Both the writers and actors of Mimes were probably careful to have their memory stored with common-places and precepts of morality, in order to introduce them appropriately in their extemporaneous performances. The maxims of Publius were interspersed through his dramas, but being the only portion of these
[pg 333] productions now remaining, they have just the appearance of thoughts or sentiments, like those of Rochefoucauld. His Mimes must either have been very numerous, or very thickly loaded with these moral aphorisms. It is also surprising that they seem raised far above the ordinary tone even of regular comedy, and appear for the greater part to be almost stoical maxims. Seneca has remarked that many of his eloquent verses are fitter for the buskin than the slipper[557]. How such exalted precepts should have been grafted on the lowest farce, and how passages, which would hardly be appropriate in the most serious sentimental comedy, were adapted to the actions or manners of gross and drunken buffoons, is a difficulty which could only be solved had we fortunately received entire a larger portion of these productions, which seem to have been peculiar to Roman genius.

The sentiments of Publius Syrus now appear trite. They have become familiar to mankind, and have been re-echoed by poets and moralists from age to age. All of them are most felicitously expressed, and few of them seem erroneous, while at the same time they are perfectly free from the selfish or worldly-minded wisdom of Rochefoucauld, or Lord Burleigh.

“Amicos res opimæ pavant, adversæ probant.
Miserrima fortuna est quæ inimico caret.
Ingratus unus miseris omnibus nocet.
Timidas vocat se cautum, parcum sordidus.
Etiam oblivisci quid scis interdum prodest.
In nullum avarus bonus, in se pessimus.
Cuivis dolori remedium est patientia.
Honestus rumor alterum est patrimonium.
Tam deest avaro quod habet quam quod non habet.
O vita misero longa—felici brevis!”

This last sentiment has been beautifully, but somewhat diffusely expressed by Metastasio:

"Perchè tarda è mai la morte
Quando è termine al martir?
A chi vive in lieta sorte
E sollecito il morir."—*Artaserse*.

The same idea is thus expressed by La Bruyere: "La vie est courte pour ceux qui sont dans les joyes du monde: Elle ne paroit longue qu'a ceux qui languissent dans l'affliction. Job se plaint de vivre long temps, et Salomon craint de mourir trop jeune." La Bruyere, indeed, has interspersed a vast number of the maxims of the Roman Mime in his writings,—expanding, modifying, or
[pg 334] accommodating them to the manners of his age and country, as best suited his purpose. One of them only, he quotes to reprehend:

"Ita amicum habeas, posse ut fieri inimicum putes."

This sentiment, which Publius had borrowed from the Greeks, and which is supposed to have been originally one of the sayings of Bias, has been censured by Cicero, in his beautiful treatise *De Amicitia*, as the bane of friendship. It would be endless to quote the lines of the different Latin poets, particularly Horace and Juvenal, which are nearly copied from the maxims of Publius Syrus. Seneca, too, has availed himself of many of his reflections, and, at the same time, does full justice to the author from whom he has borrowed. Publius, says he, is superior in genius both to tragic and comic writers: Whenever he gives up the follies of the Mimes, and that language which is directed to the crowd, he writes many things not only above that species of composition, but worthy of the tragic buskin[558].

Cneius Matius, also a celebrated writer of Mimes, was contemporary with Laberius and Publius Syrus. Some writers have confounded him with Caius Matius, who was a correspondent of Cicero, and an intimate friend of Julius Cæsar. Ziegler, though he distinguishes him from Cicero's correspondent, says, that he was the same person as the friend of Cæsar[559].

Aulus Gellius calls Matius a very learned man, (*homo eruditus et impense doctus*,) and frequently quotes him for obsolete terms and forms of expression[560]. Like other writers of Mimes, he indulged himself a good deal in this sort of phraseology, but his diction was considered as agreeable and highly poetical[561].

The Mimes of Matius were called Mimiambi, because chiefly written in iambics; but not more than a dozen lines have descended to us. The following verses have been praised for elegance and a happy choice of expressions—

"Quapropter edulcare convenit vitam,
Curasque acerbas sensibus gubernare;
Sinuque amicam recipere frigidam caldo
Columbatimque labra conserens labris[562]."

[pg 335] The age of Laberius, P. Syrus, and Matius, was the most brilliant epoch in the history of the actors of Mimes. After that period, they relapsed into a race of impudent buffoons; and, in the reign of Augustus, were classed, by Horace, with mountebanks and mendicants[563]. Pantomimic actors, who did not employ their voice, but represented everything by gesticulation and dancing, became, under Augustus, the idols of the multitude, the minions of the great, and the favourites of the fair. The *Mimi* were then but little patronized on the stage, but were still admitted into convivial parties, and even the court of the Emperors, to entertain the guests[564], like the Histrions, Jongleurs, or privileged fools, of the middle ages; and they were also employed at funerals, to mimic the manners of the deceased. Thus, the Archimimus, who represented the character of the avaricious Vespasian, at the splendid celebration of his obsequies, inquired what would be the cost of all this posthumous parade; and on being told that it would amount to ten millions of sesterces, he replied, that if they would give him a hundred thousand, they might throw his body into the river[565]. The audacity, however, of the Mimes was carried still farther, as they satirized and insulted the most ferocious Emperors during their lives, and in their own presence. An actor, in one of these pieces which was performed during the reign of Nero, while repeating the words "*Vale pater, vale mater*," signified by his gestures the two modes of drowning and poisoning, in which that sanguinary fiend had attempted to destroy both his parents[566]. The *Mimi* currently bestowed on Commodus the most opprobrious appellation[567]. One of their number, who performed before the enormous Maximin, reminded the audience, that he who was too strong for an individual, might be massacred by a multitude, and that thus the elephant, lion, and tiger, are slain. The tyrant perceived the sensation excited in the Theatre, but the suggestion was veiled in a language unknown to that barbarous and gigantic Thracian[568].

The Mimes may be traced beyond the age of Constantine, as we find the fathers of the church reprehending the immorality and licentiousness of such exhibitions[569]. Tradition is never so faithful as in the preservation of popular pastimes; and accordingly, many of those which had
[pg 336] amused the Romans survived their dominion. The annual celebration of Carnival prolonged the remembrance of them during the dark ages. Hence, the Mimes, and the Atellane fables formerly mentioned, became the origin of the Italian pantomimic parts introduced in the *Commedie dell' arte*, in which a subject was assigned, and the scenes were enumerated; but in which the dialogue was left to the extemporary invention of the actors, who represented buffoon characters

in masks, and spoke the dialect of different districts. “As to Italy,” says Warburton, in an account given by him of the Rise and Progress of the Modern Stage, “the first rudiments of its theatre, with regard to the matter, were profane subjects, and with regard to the form, a corruption of ancient Mimes and Atellanes.”—Zanni is one of the names of the Harlequin in the Italian comedies; and Sannio, as we learn from ancient writers, was a ridiculous personage, who performed in these Latin farces, with his head shaved[570], his face bedaubed with soot[571], and clothed in party-coloured garments—a dress universally worn by the ancient Italian peasantry during the existence of the Roman Republic[572]. The lowest species of mimic actors were called *planipedes*, because they performed without sock or buskin, and generally barefooted, whence Harlequin’s flat unsho’d feet. A passage of Cicero, in which he speaks of the Sannio, seems almost intended to describe the perpetual and flexible motion of the limbs, the ludicrous gestures, and mimetic countenance of Harlequin. “Quid enim” says he, “potest tam ridiculum quam Sannio esse? qui ore, vultu, imitandis motibus, voce, denique corpore ridetur ipso[573].” Among the Italians, indeed, this character soon degenerated into a booby and glutton, who became the butt of his more sharp-sighted companions. In France, Harlequin was converted into a wit,—sometimes even a moralist; and with us he has been transformed into an expert magician, who astonishes by sudden changes of the scene: But none of these was his original, or native character, which, as we have seen, corresponded to the Sannio of the Mimes and Atellane fables. In the year 1727, a bronze figure of high antiquity, and of which Quadrio gives an engraving[574], was found at Rome; and it appears from it, that the modern Pollicinella of Naples is a lineal descendant of the *Mimus Albus* of the Atellanes[575]. Ficoroni, who, in his work *Larve Sceniche*,
[pg 337] compares his immense collection of Roman masks with the modern Italian characters, was possessed of an onyx, which represented a Mime with a long nose and pointed cap, carrying a bag of money in one hand, and two brass balls in the other, which he sounded, as is supposed, like castanets when he danced. These appendages correspond to the attributes which distinguished the Italian dancer of Catana, known by the name of Giangorgolo. Another onyx exhibits a figure resembling that of Pantalone. It is also evident from the Antiques collected by Ficoroni, that the Roman *Mimi* were fond of representing caricatures of foreign nations, as we find among these ancient figures the attires of the oriental nations, and the garb of old Gaul—a species of exhibition in which the *Commedia dell’ arte* also particularly delighted.

These *Commedie dell’ arte* were brought to the highest pitch of comic and grotesque perfection by Ruzzante, an Italian dramatist, who both wrote and performed a number of them about the middle of the sixteenth century, and who, in addition to Zany and Pollicinella, peopled the stage with a new and enlivening crowd of mimetic characters. There appears to be something so congenial to the Italian taste in these exhibitions, that they long maintained their ground against the regular dramas, produced by the numerous successors of Trissino and Bibbiena, and kept supreme possession of the Italian stage, till at length Goldoni, by introducing beauties which were incongruous with the ancient masks, gradually refined the taste of his audience, made them ashamed of their former favourites, and then, in some of his pieces, ventured to exclude from the stage the whole grotesque and gesticulating family of Harlequin.

Having said so much (and, I fear, too much) of the Mimes, and other departments of the Roman drama, it would not be suitable to conclude without some notice, I. of the mechanical construction of the theatre where the dramatic entertainments were produced; and, II. of the actors’ declamation, as also of the masks and other attributes of the characters which were chiefly represented.

I. Such was the severity of the ancient republican law, that it permitted no places of amusement, except the circus, where games were specially privileged from having been instituted by Romulus, and exhibited in honour of the gods. Satiric and dramatic representations, however, as
[pg 338] we have seen, gradually became popular; and, at length, so increased in number and importance, that a *Theatre* was required for their performance.

The subject of the construction of the Roman theatre is attended with difficulty and confusion. While there are still considerable remains of amphitheatres, scarcely any ruins or vestiges of theatres exist. The writings of the ancients throw little light on the topic; and there is much contradiction, or at least apparent inconsistency, in what has been written, in consequence of the alterations which took place in the construction of theatres in the progress of time.

Those stages, which were erected in the earliest periods of the Roman republic, for the exhibitions of dancers and histrions, were probably set up according to the Etruscan mode, in places covered with boughs of trees, (Nemorosa palatia,) in tents or booths, or, at best, in temporary and moveable buildings—perhaps not much superior in dignity or accommodation to the cart of Thespis.

But, though the Etruscan histrions probably constructed the stage on which they were to perform, according to the fashion of their own country, the Greek was the model of the regular Roman theatre, as much as the pieces of Euripides and Menander were the prototypes of the Latin tragedies and comedies. The remains of a playhouse believed to be Etruscan, were discovered at Adria about the middle of the seventeenth century. But there was a wider difference between it and the Roman theatre, than between the Roman and the Greek. The Greeks had a large orchestra, and a very limited stage—the Romans, a confined orchestra, and

extensive stage; while in the Adrian theatre, the orchestra was larger even than in the Greek[576].

The first regular theatre at Rome was that constructed for Livius Andronicus on the Aventine Hill. This building, however, was but temporary, and probably existed no longer than the distinguished dramatist and actor for whose accommodation it was erected. In the year 575, M. Æmilius Lepidus got a theatre constructed adjacent to the temple of Apollo[577]; but it also was one of those occasional buildings, which were removed after the series of dramatic exhibitions for which they had been intended were concluded. A short while before the commencement of the third Punic war, a playhouse, which the censors were fitting up with seats for the convenience of
[pg 339] the spectators, was thrown down by a decree of the senate, as prejudicial to public morals; and the people continued for some time longer to view the representations standing, as formerly[578]. At length, M. Æmilius Scaurus built a theatre capable of containing 80,000 spectators, and provided with every possible accommodation for the public. It was also adorned with amazing magnificence, and at almost incredible expense. Its stage had three lofts or stories, rising above each other, and supported by 360 marble columns. The lowest floor was of marble—the second was incrusted with glass; and the third was formed of gilded boards or planks. The pillars were thirty-eight feet in height: and between them were placed bronze statues and images, to the number of not fewer than 3000. There was besides an immense superfluity of rich hangings of cloth of gold; and painted tablets, the most exquisite that could be procured, were disposed all around the *pulpitum* and scenes[579].

Curio, being unable to rival such profuse and costly decoration, distinguished himself by a new invention, which he introduced at the funeral entertainments given by him in honour of his father's memory. He constructed two large edifices of wood adjacent to each other, and suspended on hinges so contrived that the buildings could be united at their centre or separated, in such a manner as to form a theatre or amphitheatre, according to the nature of the exhibition. In both these fabrics he made stage plays be acted in the early part of the day—the semicircles being placed back to back, so that the declamation, music, and applauses, in the one, did not reach the other; and then, having wheeled them round in the afternoon, so that, by completing the circle, they formed an amphitheatre, he exhibited combats of gladiators[580]. All these changes were performed without displacing the spectators, who seem to have fearlessly trusted themselves to the strength of the machinery, and skill of the artist.

The theatres of Scaurus and Curio, though they far surpassed in extent and sumptuous decoration all the permanent theatres of modern times: yet, being built of wood, and being only destined for a certain number of representations during certain games or festivals, were demolished when these were concluded. The whole furnishings and costly materials of the theatre of Scaurus were immediately removed to his private villa, where they were burned, it is
[pg 340] said, by his servants, in a transport of indignation at the extravagant profusion of their master[581].

Pompey was the first person who erected a permanent theatre of stone. After the termination of the Mithridatic war, he made a coasting voyage along the shores and islands of Greece. In the whole of his progress he showed the attention of a liberal and cultivated mind to monuments of art. The theatre of Mitylene particularly pleased him, both in its outward form, and interior construction. He carried away with him a model of this building, that he might erect at Rome a theatre similar to it[582], but on a larger scale. The edifice which he built on the plan of this theatre, after his return to Rome, was situated in the field of Flora, near the temple of Venus Victrix, and held just one half of the number of spectators which the playhouse of Scaurus contained[583]. It was completed during Pompey's second consulship, in the year 698. On the day on which it was opened, Æsopus, the great tragic actor, appeared for the last time in one of his favourite characters, but his strength and voice failed him, and he was unable to finish the part.

The construction of this theatre was speedily followed by the erection of others. But all the Roman theatres which were built towards the close of the republic, and commencement of the empire, were formed, in most respects, on the model of the Greek theatre, both in their external plan and interior arrangement. They were oblong semicircular buildings, forming the half of an amphitheatre; and were thus rounded at one end, and terminated on the other by a long straight line. The interior was divided into three parts—1. The place for the spectators; 2. The orchestra; and, 3. The stage[584].

1. The universal passion of the Roman people for all sorts of exhibitions, rendered the places from which they were to view them a matter of competition and importance. Originally there were no seats in the theatres, and the senators stood promiscuously with the people; yet, such in those days was the reverence felt by the plebeians for their dignified superiors, that, notwithstanding their rage for spectacles, they never pushed before a senator[585]. It was in the year 559, during the consulship of the elder Scipio Africanus with Sempronius Longus, that the
[pg 341] former carried a law, by which separate places were assigned to the senators[586]. This regulation was renewed from time to time, as circumstances of political confusion removed the line of distinction which had been drawn. Scipio lost much of his popularity by this aristocratic innovation, and is said to have severely repented of the share he had taken in it[587]. By the law of Scipio, part of the orchestra, (which, in the Greek theatre, was occupied by the chorus,) was appropriated to the senators. The knights and plebeians, however, continued to sit promiscuously for more than 100 years longer; but at length, in 685, a regulation of the tribune, Roscius Otho, allotted to the knights, tribunes, and persons of a certain *census*, fourteen rows of circular benches immediately behind the orchestra. This was a still more unpopular measure than that

introduced by the edict of Africanus. Otho, during the consulship of Cicero, having entered the theatre, was hissed by the multitude, while Roscius was acting one of his principal parts; but Cicero presently called them out to the temple of Bellona, where he delivered a harangue, which appeased their fury and reconciled them to the tribune[588]. Henceforth the senators held undisputed possession of the orchestra; and the knights, with the better classes, retained the fourteen rows of seats immediately surrounding it.

The seats for the senators, arranged in the orchestra, were straight benches, placed at equal distances from each other, and were not fixed[589]. The other benches, which were assigned to the knights and people, were semicircularly disposed around the circumference of the theatre, and spread from the orchestra to the rounded end of the building The extremities of the seats joined the orchestra, and they were carried one above another, sloping, till they reached the remotest part, and ascended almost to the ceiling. Thus the benches which were lowest and most contiguous to the orchestra, described a smaller circumference than those which spread more towards the outer walls of the theatre[590]. Over the higher tier of seats a portico was constructed, the roof of which ranged with the loftiest part of the scene, in order that the voice expanding equally, might be carried to the uppermost seats, and thence to the top of the building[591]. The benches, which were gently raised above each other, were separated into three sets or tiers:
[pg 342] each tier, at least in most theatres, consisting of seven benches. According to some writers, the separation of these tiers was a passage, or gallery, which went quite round them for facility of communication; according to others, it was a belt, or precinction, which was twice the height, and twice the breadth of the seats[592]. It would appear, however, from a passage in Vitruvius, that both a raised belt, and a gallery or corridore, surrounded each tier of seats[593]. One of the precinctions formed the division between the places of the knights and those of the people[594]. In a different and angular direction, the tiers and ranges of seats were separated by stairs, making so many lines in the circumference of the seats, and leading from the orchestra to the doors of the theatre. The benches were cut by the stairs into the form of wedges. The steps of the stairs were always a little lower than the seats; but the number of stairs varied in different theatres. Pompey's theatre had fifteen, that of Marcellus only seven[595]. As luxury increased at Rome, these stairs were bedewed with streams of fragrant water, for the purposes of coolness and refreshment. At the top of each flight of steps were doors called *vomitoria*, which gave egress from the theatre, and communicated directly with the external stair-cases[596].

In the ancient temporary Roman theatres, the body of the building, or place where the spectators sat, was open at top to receive the light. But Quintus Catulus, during the entertainments exhibited at his dedication of the Capitol, introduced the luxury of canvass, which was drawn partially or completely over the theatre at pleasure[597]. This curtain was at first of simple unornamented wool, and was merely used as a screen from the sun, or a protection from rain; but, in process of time, silken hangings of glossy texture and splendid hues waved from the roof, flinging their gorgeous tints on the *proscenium* and spectators:—

> "Et vulgo faciunt id lutea russaque vela,
> Et ferrugina, quum, magnis intenta theatris,
> Per malos vulgata trabesque, trementia fluctant.
> Namque ibi consessum caveai subter, et omnem
> Scenalem speciem, patrum, matrumque, deorumque,
> Inficiunt, coguntque suo fluitare colore[598]."

2. *The Orchestra* was a considerable space in the centre of the theatre, part of which was allotted
[pg 343] for the seats of the senators. The remainder was occupied by those who played upon musical instruments, whose office it was, in the performance both of tragedies and comedies, to give to the actors and audience the tone of feeling which the dramatic parts demanded. In tragedies, the music invariably accompanied the Chorus. It was not, however, confined to the Chorus; but appears to have been also in the monologues, and perhaps in some of the most impassioned parts of the dialogue; for Cicero tells of Roscius, that he said, when he grew older, he would make the music play slower, that he might the more easily keep up with it[599]. I do not, however, believe, that comedy was a musical performance throughout: Mr Hawkins, after quoting a number of authorities to this purpose, concludes, "that comedy had no music but between the acts, except, perhaps, occasionally in the case of marriages and sacrifices, if any such were represented on the stage[600]."

Every play had its own musical prelude, which distinguished it from others, and from which many of the audience at once knew what piece was about to be performed[601]. The chief musical instruments employed in the theatre were the *tibiæ*, or flutes, with which the comedies of Terence are believed to have been represented. The *Andria* is said to have been acted, "Tibiis paribus, dextris et sinistris;"—the *Eunuch*, "Tibiis duabus dextris;"—the *Heautontimorumenos*, on its first appearance, "Tibiis imparibus;" on its second, "Duabus dextris;"—the *Adelphi*, "Tibiis sarranis;"—the *Hecyra*, "Tibiis paribus,"—and the *Phormio*, "Tibiis imparibus." It thus appears, that the theatrical flutes were classed as "dextræ et sinistræ," and also as "pares et impares," and that there were likewise "Tibiæ Serranæ," or "Sarranæ," to which, it is believed, the Phrygiæ were opposed. There has been much dispute, however, as to what constituted the distinction between these different sets of pipes. Scaliger thinks, that the "Tibiæ dextræ et sinistræ" were formed by cutting the reed into two parts: that portion which was next to the root making the left, and that next to the top the right flute.—whence the notes of the former were more grave, and those of the latter more acute[602]. Mad. Dacier, however, is of opinion, that flutes were

denominated right and left from the valves, in playing, being stopped with the right or left hand.
[pg 344] There is still more difficulty with regard to the "Tibiæ pares et impares." Some persons conjecture, that the Tibiæ pares were a set of two or more pipes of the same pitch in the musical scale, and Impares such as did not agree in pitch[603]. The opinion, that flutes were called Pares when they had an even, and Impares when an odd number of valves, is not inconsistent with this notion; nor with that adopted by Dempster[604], that the difference depended on their being equal or unequal distances between the valves. It may be also reconciled with the idea of Salmasius, that when the same set of flutes were employed, as two right or two left, a play was said to be acted Tibiis paribus; and, when one or more right with one or more left were used, it was announced as performed Tibiis imparibus. This idea, however, of Salmasius, is inconsistent with what is said as to the *Andria* being acted with equal flutes right and left; unless, indeed, we suppose, with Mad. Dacier, that this is to be understood of different representations, and that the flutes were of the same description at each performance, but were sometimes a set of right, and at other times a set of left flutes.

As to the Tibiæ Serranæ, some have supposed that they were so called from Serra, since they produced the sharp grating sound occasioned by a saw[605]; some, that they were denominated Sarranæ from Sarra, a city in Phœnicia, where such flutes are believed to have been invented[606]; and others, that they derived their name from Sero to lock; because in these flutes, there were valves or stops which opened and shut alternately[607]. It is only farther known, that the Tibiæ Serranæ belonged to the class called Pares, and the Phrygiæ, to which they were opposed, to that styled Impares.

All flutes, of whatever denomination, were extremely simple in the commencement of the dramatic art at Rome. Their form was plain, and they had but few notes. In progress of time, however, they became more complex, and louder in their tones[608].

Several chorded instruments were also used in the orchestra, as the lyre and harp, and in later times an hydraulic organ was introduced. This instrument, which is described in the *Organon* of Pub. Optatianus, emitted a sound which was produced from air created by the concussion of water. Cornelius Severus, in his poem of *Ætna*, alludes to it, under the name of *Cortina*—

[pg 345]
> "Carmineque irriguo magni Cortina Theatri
> Imparibus numerosa modis canit arte regentis,
> Quæ tenuem impellens animam subremigat undam[609]."

3. *The Stage*. The front area of the stage was a little elevated above that part of the orchestra where the musicians were placed, and was called the *Proscenium*. On the proscenium a wooden platform, termed the *pulpitum*, was raised to the height of five feet[610]. This the actors ascended to perform their characters; and here all the dramatic representations of the Romans were exhibited[611], except the Mimes, which were acted on the lower floor of the proscenium. Certain architectural proportions were assigned to all these different parts of the theatre.

The whole space or area behind the pulpitum was called the *Scena*, because the scenery appropriate to the piece was there exhibited. "The three varieties of scenes," says Vitruvius, "are termed tragic, comic, and satyric, each of which has a style of decoration peculiar to itself. In the tragic scene columns are represented, with statues, and other embellishments suitable to palaces and public buildings. The comic scene represents the houses of individuals, with their balconies and windows arranged in imitation of private dwellings. The satyric is adorned with groves, dens, and mountains, and other rural objects." The rigid adherence of the ancients to the unity of place, rendered unnecessary that frequent shifting of scenes which is required in our dramas. When the side scenes were changed, the frames, or painted planks, were turned by machinery, and the scene was then called *versatilis*, or revolving: When it was withdrawn altogether, and another brought forward, it was called *ductilis*, or, sliding. There were also trapdoors in the floor of this part of the theatre, by which ghosts and the Furies ascended when their presence was required; and machines were disposed above the scene, as also at its sides, by which gods and other superior beings were suddenly brought upon the stage.

At the bottom of the scene, or end most remote from the spectators, there was a curtain of painted canvass, which was first used after the tapestry of Attalus had been brought to Rome[612]. It was dropped when the play began, remained down during the performance, and was drawn up
[pg 346] when the representation concluded. This was certainly the case during the existence of the republic; but I imagine that an alteration took place in the time of the emperors, and that the curtain, being brought more forward on the scene, was then, as with us, raised at the commencement, and dropped at the end of the piece:—

> "Mox ubi ridendas inclusit pagina partes,
> Vera redit facies, dissimulata perit[613]."

At each side of the *scena* there were doors called *Hospitalia*, by which the actors entered and made their exits.

That part of the theatre which comprehended the stage and scene was originally covered with branches of trees, which served both for shelter and ornament. It was afterwards shut in with planks, which were painted for the first time in the year 654. About the same period the scene was enriched with gold and silver hangings, and the proscenium was decorated with columns,

statues, and altars to the god in whose honour, or at whose festival, the stage plays were represented.

II. In turning our attention to the *actors* who appeared on the *pulpitum* of the Roman stage, the point which first attracts our notice is that supposed separation of the dramatic labour, by which one performer gesticulated while the other declaimed. This division, however, did not take place at all in comedy, or in the ordinary dialogue (*Diverbia*) of tragedy; as is evinced by various passages in the Latin authors, which show that Æsopus, the chief tragic actor, and Roscius, the celebrated comedian, both gesticulated and declaimed. Cicero informs us, that Æsopus was hissed if he was in the least degree hoarse[614]; and he also mentions one remarkable occasion, on which, having returned to the stage after he had long retired from it, his voice suddenly failed him just as he commenced an adjuration in the part he represented[615]. This evinces that Æsopus declaimed; and the same author affords us proof that he gesticulated: For, in the treatise *De Divinatione*, he introduces his brother Quintus, declaring, that he had himself witnessed in Æsopus such animation of countenance, and vehemence of gesture, that he seemed carried
[pg 347] beside himself by some irresistible power[616]. Roscius, indeed, is chiefly talked of for the gracefulness of his gestures[617], but there are also passages which refer to the modulation of his voice[618]. It may perhaps, however, be said, that the above citations only prove that the same actor gesticulated in some characters, and declaimed in others; it seems, however, much more probable that Æsopus went through the whole dramatic part, than that he appeared in some plays merely as a gesticulating, and in others as a declaiming, performer.

There was thus no division in the ordinary dialogue, or *diverbium*, as it was called, and it was employed only in the monologues, and those parts of high excitement and pathos, which were declaimed somewhat in the tone of *recitativo* in an Italian opera, and were called *Cantica*, from being accompanied either by the flutes or by instrumental music. That one actor should have recited, and another performed the corresponding gestures in the scenes of a tragedy, and that, too, in parts of the highest excitement, and in which theatric illusion should have been rendered most complete, certainly appears the most incongruous and inexplicable circumstance in the history of the Roman Drama. This division did not exist on the Greek stage, but it commenced at Rome as early as the time of Livius Andronicus, who, being *encored*, as we call it, in his monologues, introduced a slave, who declaimed to the sound of the flute, while he himself executed the corresponding gesticulations[619]. To us nothing can seem at first view more ridiculous, and more injurious to theatric illusion, than one person going through a dumb show or pantomime, while another, who must have appeared a supernumerary on the pulpitum, recited, with his arms across, the corresponding verses, in tones of the utmost vehemence and pathos[620].
[pg 348] It must, however, be recollected, that the Roman theatres were larger and worse lighted than ours; that the mask prevented even the nearest spectators from perceiving the least motion of the lips, and they thus heard only the words without knowing whether they proceeded from him who recited or gestured; and, finally, that these actors were so well trained, that they agreed precisely in their respective parts. We are informed by Cicero, that a comedian who made a movement out of time was as much hissed as one who mistook the pronunciation of a word or quantity of a syllable in a verse[621]. Seneca says, that it is surprising to see the attitudes of eminent comedians on the stage overtake and keep pace with speech, notwithstanding the velocity of the tongue[622].

So much importance was attached to the art of dramatic gesticulation, that it was taught in the schools; and there were instituted motions as well as natural. These artificial gestures, however, of arbitrary signification, were chiefly employed in pantomime, where speech not being admitted, more action was required to make the piece intelligible: And it appears from Quintilian, that comedians who acted with due decorum, never, or but very rarely, made use of instituted signs in their gesticulation[623]. The movements suited to theatrical declamation were subdivided into three different sorts. The first, called *Emmelia*, was adapted to tragic declamation; the second, *Cordax*, was fitted to comedies; and the third, *Sicinnis*, was proper to satiric pieces, as the Mimes and *Exodia*[624].

The recitation was also accounted of high importance, so that the player who articulated took prodigious pains to improve his voice, and an almost whimsical care to preserve it[625]. Nearly a third part of Dubos' once celebrated work on Poetry and Painting, is occupied with the theatric declamation of the Roman actors. The art of framing the declamation of dramatic pieces was, he informs us, the object of a particular study, and indeed profession, at Rome. It was composed and signified in notes, placed over each verse of the play, to direct the tones and inflection of voice
[pg 349] which were to be observed in recitation. There were a certain number of accents in the Latin language, and the composer of a declamation marked each syllable requiring to be accented, the grave or the acute accent which properly belonged to it, while on the remaining syllables, he noted, by means of conventional marks, a tone conformable to the tenor of the discourse. The declamation was thus not a musical song, but a recitation subject to the direction of a noted melody. Tragic declamation was graver and more harmonious than comic, but even the comic was more musical and varied than the pronunciation used in ordinary conversation[626]. This system, it might be supposed, would have deprived the actors of much natural fire and enthusiasm, from the constraint to which they were thus subjected; but the whole dramatic

system of the ancients was more artificial than ours, and something determinate and previously arranged, as to quantities and pauses, was perhaps essential to enable the gesticulating actor to move in proper concert with the reciter. The whole system, however, of noted declamation, is denied by Duclos and Racine, who think it impossible that accentuated tones of passion could be devised or employed[627].

Both the actor who declaimed, and he who gesticulated, wore *masks*; and, before concluding the subject of the Roman theatre, it may not be improper to say a few words concerning this singular dramatic contrivance, as also concerning the attire of the performers.

From the opportunity which they so readily afforded, of personally satirizing individuals, by representing a caricatured resemblance of their features, masks were first used in the old Greek comedy, which assumed the liberty of characterizing living citizens of Athens. It is most probable, however, that the hint of dramatic masks was given to the Romans by the Etruscans[628]. That they were employed by the histrions of that latter nation, can admit of no doubt. The actors represented on the Etruscan vases are all masked, and have caps on their heads[629]. We also know, that in some of the satirical exhibitions of the ancient Italians, they wore masks made of wood:

> "Nec non Ausonii, Trojâ gens missa, coloni
> Versibus incomptis ludunt, risuque soluto
> Oraque corticibus sumunt horrenda cavatis[630]."

[pg 350] Originally, and in the time of L. Andronicus, the actors on the Roman stage used only caps or beavers[631], and their faces were daubed and disguised with the lees of wine, as at the commencement of the dramatic art in Greece. The increased size, however, of the theatres, and consequent distance of the spectators from the stage, at length compelled the Roman players to borrow from art the expression of those passions which could no longer be distinguished on the living countenance of the actor.

Most of the Roman masks covered not merely the face, but the greater part of the head[632], so that the beard and hair were delineated, as well as the features. This indeed is implied in one of the fables of Phædrus, where a fox, after having examined a tragic mask, which he found lying in his way, exclaims, "What a vast shape without brains[633]!"—An observation obviously absurd, if applied to a mere vizard for the face, which was not made, and could not have been expected, to contain any brains. Addison, in his *Travels in Italy*, mentions, that, in that country, he had seen statues of actors, with the *larva* or mask. One of these was not merely a vizard for the face; it had false hair, and came over the whole head like an helmet. He also mentions, however, that he has seen figures of Thalia, sometimes with an entire head-piece in her hand, and a friz running round the edges of the face; but at others, with a mask merely for the countenance, like the modern vizards of a masquerade.

The masks of the regular theatre were made of chalk, or pipe-clay, or terra cotta. A few were of metal, but these were chiefly the masks of the Mimes. The chalk or clay masks were so transparent and artfully prepared, that the play of the muscles could be seen through them; and it appears that an opening was frequently left for the eyes, since Cicero informs us expressly, that in parts of high pathos or indignation, the actor's eyes were often observed to sparkle under the vizard[634]. From a vast collection of Roman masks engraved in the work of Ficoroni, *De Larvis Scenicis*, it appears that most of them represented features considerably distorted, and enlarged beyond the natural proportions. A wide and gaping mouth is one of their chief characteristics.
[pg 351] The mask being in a great measure contrived to prevent the dispersion of the voice, the mouth was so formed, and was so incrusted with metal, as to have somewhat the effect of a speaking-trumpet—hence the Romans gave the name of *persona* to masks, because they rendered the articulation of those who wore them more distinct and sonorous[635]. There are, however, a few figures in the work of Ficoroni, carrying in their hands masks which are not unnaturally distorted, and which have, in several instances, a resemblance to the actor who holds them. M. Boindin, on the authority of a passage in Lucian's *Dialogue on Dancing*, thinks that these less hideous masks were employed by dancers, or pantomimic actors, who, as they did not speak, had no occasion for the distended mouth[636].

Roscius, who had some defect in his eyes, is said to have been the first actor who used the Greek mask[637]: but it was not invariably worn even by him, as appears from a passage of Cicero.—"All," says that author, "depends upon the face, and all the power of the face is centred in the eyes. Of this our old men are the best judges, for they were not lavish of their applause even to Roscius in a mask[638]."

The different characters who chiefly appeared on the Roman stage—the father, the lover, the parasite, the pander, and the courtezan, were distinguished by their appropriate masks. A particular physiognomy was considered as so essential to each character, that it was thought, that without a proper mask, a complete knowledge of the personage could not be communicated. "In tragedies," says Quintilian, "Niobe appears with a sorrowful countenance—and Medea announces her character by the fierce expression of her physiognomy—stern courage is painted on the mask of Hercules, while that of Ajax proclaims his transport and phrensy. In comedies, the masks of slaves, pimps, and parasites—peasants, soldiers, old women, courtezans, and female slaves, have each their particular character[639]." Julius Pollux, in his *Onomasticon*, has given a

minute description of the mask appropriate to every dramatic character[640]. His work, however,
[pg 352] was written in the reign of the Emperor Commodus, and his observations are chiefly formed on the practice of the Greek theatre, so that there may have been some difference between the various masks he describes, and those of the Roman stage, towards the end of the republic. The matron, virgin, and courtezan, he informs us, were particularly distinguished from each other by the manner in which their hair was arranged and braided. The mask of the parasite had brown and curled hair: That of the braggart captain had black hair, and a swarthy complexion[641]; and it farther appears from the engravings of masks in Ficoroni, that he had a distended or inflated countenance. The masks, likewise, distinguished the severe from the indulgent father—the Micio from the Demea—and the sober youth from the debauched rake[642]. If, in the course of the comedy, the father was to be sometimes pleased, but sometimes incensed, one of the brows of his vizard was knit, and the other smooth; and the actor was always careful, during the course of the representation, to turn to the spectators, along with the change of passion, the profile which expressed the feeling predominant at the time[643]. Julius Pollux has also described the dresses suited to each character: The youth was clad in purple, the parasite in black, slaves in white, the pander in party-coloured garments, and the courtezan in flowing yellow robes[644].

It would introduce too long discussion, were I to enter on the much-agitated question concerning the advantages and disadvantages of masks in theatric representations. The latter are almost too apparent to be enlarged on or recapitulated. It is obvious to remark, that though masks might do very well for a Satyr and Cyclops, who have no resemblance to human features, they are totally unsuitable for a flatterer, a miser, or the like characters, which abound in our own species, in whom the expression of countenance is more agreeable even than the action, and forms a considerable part of the histrionic art. Could we suppose that a vizard represented ever so naturally the general humour of a character, it can never be assimilated with the variety of passions incident to each person, in the whole course of a play. The grimace may be proper on some occasions, but it is too fixed and steady to agree with all. In consequence, however, of the great size of the ancient theatres, there was not so much lost by the concealment of the living
[pg 353] countenance, as we are apt at first to suppose. It was impossible that those alterations of visage, which are hidden by a mask, could have been distinctly perceived by one-tenth of the 40,000 spectators of a Roman play. The feelings portrayed in the ancient drama were neither so tender nor versatile as those in modern plays, and the actors did not require the same flexibility of features—there were fewer flashes of joy in sorrow, fewer gleams of benignity in hatred. Hercules, the Satyrs, the Cyclops, and other characters of superhuman strength or deformity, were more frequently introduced on the ancient than the modern stage, and, by aid of the mask, were more easily invested with their appropriate force or ugliness. By means, too, of these masks, the dramatists introduced foreign nations on the stage with their own peculiar physiognomy, and among others, the *Rufi persona Batavi*. Their use, besides, prevented the frequenters of the theatre from seeing an actor, far advanced in years, play the part of a young lover, since the vizard, under which the performer appeared, was always, to that extent at least, agreeable to the character he assumed. In addition to all this, by concealing the mouth it prevented the spectators from observing whence the sound issued, and thus palliated the absurdity of one actor declaiming, and the other beating time, as it were by gestures. Finally, as the tragic actor was elevated by his *cothurnus*, or buskin, above the ordinary stature of man, it became necessary, in order to preserve the due proportions of the human form, that his countenance also should be enlarged to corresponding dimensions.

I shall here close the first Volume of the History of Roman Literature, in which I have treated of the Origin of the Romans—the Progress of their Language, and the different Poets by whom their Literature was illustrated, till the era of Augustus. At that period Virgil beautifully acknowledges the superiority of the Greeks in statuary, oratory, and science; but he might, with equal justice, (and the avowal would have come from him with peculiar propriety,) have confessed that the Muses loved better to haunt Pindus and Parnassus, than Soracte or the Alban Hill. From the days of Ennius downwards, the literature and poetry of the Romans was, with exception, perhaps, of
[pg 354] satire, and some dramatic entertainments of a satiric description, wholly Greek—consisting merely of imitations, and, in some instances, almost of translations from that language. We may compare it to a tree transplanted in full growth to an inferior soil or climate, and which, though still venerable or beautiful, loses much of its verdure and freshness, sends forth no new shoots, is preserved alive with difficulty, and, if for a short time neglected, shrivels and decays.

END OF VOLUME I.

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2. *Rasselas*.
3. *Childe Harolde*, c. IV.

4. *Vindiciæ Gallicæ*.
5. *Vindiciæ Gallicæ*.
6. *Rasselas*.
7. Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, Vol. IV.
8. *Civil and Constitutional History of Rome, from its Foundation to the Age of Augustus*, by Henry Bankes, Esq. M. P. ed. London, 1818, 2 vol. 8vo.
9. *Voyage de Polyclete*, Lettre 2. 3 Tom. Paris, 1820.
10. *Herod. Clio.* c. 94.
11. *Herculanensia*, Dissert. V. Lond. 1810.
12. *Geograph.* Lib. V. c. 2.
13. *Histor. Roman.* Lib. I. c. 1.
14. *Quæstiones Romanæ*.
15. *Annal.* Lib. IV. c. 55.
16. *Antiquitates Romanæ*. Lib. I. p. 22. Ed. Sylburg, 1586.
17. *Antiquitates Romanæ*. Lib. I. p. 22, &c.
18. *De Etruria Regali*. Lib. I. Ed. Florent. 1723. 2 tom. fol.
19. *Geographia Sacra*, De Coloniis Phœnicum. Lib. I. tom. I. p. 582, &c. *Oper.* Lugd. Bat. 1712.
20. *Miscellaneous Works*, Vol. IV. p. 184. Ed. 8vo. 1814.
21. Micali, *L'Italia avanti il Dominio dei Romani*. Ed. Firenz. 1810. Bossi, *Istoria d'Italia*. Ed. 1819.
22. *Museum Etruscum*.
23. *Origin and Progress of Language*, vol. V. book i. c. 3. See also Swinton, *De Lingua Etruriæ Vernacula*.
24. At the end of his Dissertation he alludes to a future work, in which he is to settle the particular district and time of the Etruscan emigration; but I do not know whether or not he ever accomplished this undertaking.
25. "Confesso ingenuamente," says the author, "che questa Etimologia della voce Eridano mi è sempre piaciuta assai."—*Dissertaz. sopra l'Origine de Terreni, nell Saggi di Dissert. dell Acad. Etrusca*. Tom. III. p. 1.
26. *Supplem. ad Monument. Etrusc. Dempst.* c. 47. See also Riccobaldi del Bava, *Dissertaz. sopra L'Origine dell' Etrusca Nazione*.
27. Deutoronomy, c. 18, v. 14. *Ragionament. degl' Itali primitivi. in Istoria Diplomatica*. Ed. Mantua, 1727.
28. *Origini Italiche*. 3 Tom. folio. Lucca, 1767–72.
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30. *Histoire des Celtes*. Paris, 1770.
31. *Recherches sur l'Origine des Differens Peuples d'Italie*, in *l'Hist. de l'Acad. des Inscriptions*. Tom. XVIII.
32. *De Origine Latinæ Linguæ*. Ed. 1720.
33. Heyne, *Opuscula Academica*, Tom. V. See also Court de Gebelin, *Monde Primitif*.
34. Non enim Etruscorum stirpem ab una gente nec ab una turba deductam; sed temporum successu plurium populorum propagines in eum populum, qui tandem Etruscum nomen terris his allevit confluxisse arbitror. *Nov. Comment. Soc. Reg. Gotting.* Tom. III.
35. *Nat. Hist.* Lib. III. c. 14. Ed. Hardouin.
36. Visconti, who has since become so celebrated by his *Iconographie Grecque et Romaine*, says in the *Approvazione* of the work of Lanzi, which he had perused in his official capacity,—"Il saggio di lingua Etrusca, che ho letto per commissione del Rmo. P. M. del S. P. A., mi è sembrato assolutamente il miglior libro che sia stato sinora scritto su questo difficile e vasto argomento." This opinion, so early formed, has been confirmed by that of all writers who have subsequently touched on the subject.
37. *Saggio di Lingua Etrusca*. Rom. 1789. 3 Tom. 8vo.
38. Diodorus Siculus—Athenæus.
39. Guarnacci, *Origini Italiche*.
40. Sir William Jones, *On the Gods of Italy and India*.
41. *Herculanensia*, Dissert. V.
42. *Hermes Scythicus*, p. 90.

43. Ovid. *Fast.* I. 90.

44. Servius, ad Æneid. VII. 84.

45.
L'Olympe de Numa fut plus majestueux,
Mercure moins fripon, Mars moins voluptueux;
Jupiter brula moins d'une flamme adultere,
Venus meme reçut une culte plus severe.
De Lille. Imagination. Ch. vi.

46. *Antiquitat. Roman.* Lib. II. c. 19.

47. Beaufort is of opinion that the gradual introduction of the Greek mythology at Rome commenced as early as the reign of Tarquinius Priscus. *La Republique Romaine. Discours Preliminaire*. Ed. 1766. 2 Tom. 4to.

48. Heyne, Excurs. V. lib. vii. ad Æneid.

49. Bentley, however, is of opinion that the College of Augurs, whose divination was made from observations of birds, was of Roman institution, being founded by Numa, and that the skill and province of the Haruspices of Etruria reached to three things, *exta, fulgura, et ostenta*, entrails of cattle, thunders, and monstrous births, but did not include auguries from the flight of birds. "It often happened," he adds, "that this pack of Etruscan soothsayers gave their answers quite cross to what the Roman augurs had given, so that the two disciplines clashed."—(*Remarks on a late Discourse of Freethinking*, p. 241, Lond. 1737.)

50. Valerius Maximus, Lib. I. c. i. Ed. 1533. Cicero, *De Divinatione*, Lib. I. c. 41. Ed. Schütz.

51. *Origin, &c. of Language*. Part I. book iii. c. 11.

52. *Diversions of Purley*. Part II. c. iv. Wakefield and Horne Tooke had undertaken in conjunction a division and separation of the Latin language into two parts, placing together, in one division, all that could be clearly shewn to be Greek, and in the other, all that could be clearly shewn to be of northern extraction, including, I presume, both Teutonic and Celtic originals. This design, we are informed, was frustrated "by the persecution of that virtuous and harmless good man, Mr Gilbert Wakefield."—*Divers. Purley*, II. 4. See also on the origin of the Latin Language, Ginguené, *Hist. Littéraire d'Italie*, Tom. I.

53. *De Novi Instrumenti Stylo*, c. 1. London, 1648.

54. *De Lingua Latina*, lib. IV. c. 10.

55. Remondini, *Dissertaz. sopra una iscrizione Osca*, p. 49. ed. 1760, Genoa. Some writers have even asserted, that the Twelve tables were originally written in the Oscan dialect. Terrasson, *Hist. de la Jurisprudence Romaine*. Baron de Theis, *Voyage de Polyclete*, let. 15.

56. It would be foreign to the object of this work to enter into the inquiry, whether the Etruscan arts were the result of indigenous taste and cultivation, or were derived from the Greeks. The latter proposition has been maintained by Winckelman and Lanzi—the former by Tiraboschi and Pignotti. (*Storia di Toscana*, T. 1. Ed. Pisa, 1815.)

57. Forsyth's *Remarks on Italy*, p. 141.

58. "La grandeur de Rome," says Montesquieu, "parût bientòt dans ses edifices publics. Les ouvrages qui ont donné, et qui donnent encore aujourd'hui la plus haute idée de sa puissance ont été faits sous les Rois. On commençoit déjà a batir la Ville eternelle." *Grandeur et Decadence des Romains*, c. 1.

59. Dempster, *Etruria Regalis*, Lib. III. c. 80.

60. Horat. *Epist.* Lib. II. Ep. 1.

61. Ennius, *Annal.*

62. *De Die Natali*, c. 5.

63. *Saggio di Ling. Etrusc.* Tom. II. p. 567.

64. *De Ling. Lat.* Lib. IV. c. 9.

65. Orgival, *Considerat. sur l'Origine et Progrés des Belles Lettres chez les Romains*.

66. *Comment. de Erudit. Societat.*

67.
Romulus ut saxo locum circumdedit alto,
Cuilibet huc, inquit, confuge tutus erit.

68. Plautus, *Captivi Prol.*

69. *Antiquitat. Roman.* Lib. II.

70. Livy. Lib. VII. c. 2. Sine carmine ullo, sine imitandorum carminum actu, ludiones ex Etruria acciti, ad tibicinis modos saltantes, haud indecoros motus more Tusco dabant.

71. Flogel, *Geschichte der Komisch. Litteratur*. Tom. IV. p. 82.

72. Dionys. Halic. Lib. II. c. 34.

73. Livy, Lib. III. c. 29. Epulantesque, cum carmine triumphali et solennibus jocis, commissantium modo, currum secuti sunt.

74. Ibid. Lib. IV. c. 20. In eum milites carmina incondita, æquantes eum Romulo, canere.

75. Ibid. Lib. XXVIII. c. 9.

76. *Tusc. Disput.* Lib. I. c. 2. and lib. IV. c. 2. *Brutus*, c. 19.

77. Lib. II. c. 1.

78. *De Vita Populi Romani*, ap. Nonium, c. ii. sub voce, Assa.

79. Majores natu in conviviis ad tibias egregia superiorum opera, carmine comprehensa, pangebant.

80. Cicero, *Brutus*, c. 19. The passage rather seems to imply that they had been in writing, "Utinam *extarent illa carmina*, quæ multis sæculis ante suam ætatem in epulis esse cantata a singulis convivis de clarorum virorum laudibus, in Originibus scriptum reliquit Cato"!

81. *Lectures on Literature*, Lect. III.

82. *Romische Geschichte*. Berlin, 1811. 2 Tom. 8vo.

83. Lib. IV. c. 2.

84. Lib. III. c. 22.

85. Bossi, *Storia de Italia*, Tom. VI. p. 375.

86. *Elementa Doctrinæ Metricæ*, Lib. III. c. 9. Lanzi, (*Saggio di Ling. Etrusc.*) Schoell, (*Hist. Abregée de la Litterature Romaine*, Tom. I. p. 42. introduct.) and Eustace (*Classical Tour in Italy*, Vol. III. p. 416.) give a somewhat different interpretation. Pleores, they render flores, and not plures, in which they seem right—Satur, fufere Mars, (you shall be full, O Mars!) they make Ator, or ador fieri, Mars, (Let there be food, O Mars!) which is evidently erroneous. The following will give some general notion of the import of the verses:—

> Ye Lares, aid us! Mars, thou God of Might!
> From murrain shield the flocks—the flowers from blight.
> For thee, O Mars! a feast shall be prepared;
> Salt, and a wether chosen from the herd:
> Invite, by turn, each Demigod of Spring—
> Great Mars, assist us! Triumph! Triumph sing!

87. Varro, *De Ling. Lat.* Lib. VI. c. 1 and 3.

88. Servius *ad Æneid.* Lib. VIII.

89. Cannegieter, *Dissert. Philol. Jurid. ad legem Numæ*.

90. Funccius, *De Pueritia Latin. Ling.* c. III. § 6 and 8.

91. Lib. XLII. c. 20

92. The letters which have been supplied are here printed in Italics.

93. Ciacconius, however, is of opinion that this is not precisely what was inscribed on the base of the column in the time of Duillius, for that the inscription, having been greatly effaced, was repaired, or rather engraved anew, after the time of Julius Cæsar. *In Colum. Rost. Explic.*

94. *Illustrations of Childe Harold*, p. 169.

95. This sort of rustic Latin has by some writers been supposed to be the origin of the modern Italian.

96. Omnino ad jura pontificalia pertinere videntur. *In Dempsteri libros Paralipomena*. Ed. Luca, 1767. It was on these Eugubian tables that, in modern times, the alphabet of the Etruscan language was first found. At the earliest attempt it was very imperfect and contradictory; Maffei maintaining that these tables were in Hebrew, and Gori that they were in Greek characters; but at length in 1732, M. Bourguet, a Frenchman, by comparing the tables in the Roman with those in the Etruscan character, found that the former was a compendium of the latter, and that many words in the one corresponded with words in the other. Having got this key, he was enabled, by comparing word with word, and letter with letter, to form an alphabet, which, though not perfect, was much more complete than any previously produced, and was found to be the same with that of the Pelasgi, and not very different from the alphabet communicated to the Greeks by Cadmus. *Dissertaz. dell Academia Etrusca*. T. I. p. 1. 1742.

97. Quintilian, *Institut.* Lib. I. c. 7.

98. *Quæstiones Romanæ*.

99. Festus, voce *Solitaurilia*.

100. For a fuller detail of these variations see Funccius *de Pueritia Ling. Lat.* c. 5. Id. *de Adolescentia Ling. Lat.* c. 7. and Terrasson, *Hist. de la Jurisprudence Romaine*. Part I. par. 8.

101. For a fuller detail of these variations see Funccius *de Pueritia Ling. Lat.* c. 5. Id. *de Adolescentia Ling. Lat.* c. 7. and Terrasson, *Hist. de la Jurisprudence Romaine*. Part I. par. 8.

102. This numeration, which rests on the authority of Diodorus Siculus, (Lib. XII.) and Strabo, (Lib. VI.) has been a subject of considerable discussion and controversy in modern times. (See Wallace on the numbers of Mankind, Hume's Essay on Populousness of Ancient Nations, and Gibbon's Miscellaneous Works, vol. III. p. 178.) In all MSS. of ancient authors, the numbers are corrupt and uncertain.

103. Plutarch, *De Exilio*. Id. *Vit. decem. Orator.* Strabo, *Geog.* Lib. XIV.

104. Cicero, *Cato Major, seu de Senectute*, c. 12.

105. *Rhetoricorum*, Lib. II. c. 1.

106. Horat. *Epist.* Lib. II. ep. 1. v. 58.

107. See Micali, *Italia avant. il Domin. dei Romani*. Raoul-Rochette, *Hist. de l'Etablissement des Colonies Grecques*. Heyne, *Opusc. Academ.* Nogarolæ, *Epist. de Italis qui Græce scripserunt*. ap. Fabricius, *Supplem. ad Vossium De Histor. Lat.*

108. Ausus est primus argumento fabulam serere. Livy, Lib. VII. c. 2.

109. Tiraboschi, *Stor. dell. Letteratura Italiana*. Parte III. Lib. II. c. 1.

110. Hieronym. in *Euseb. Chron.* p. 37. In Scaliger, *Thesaurus Temporum*, ed. Amstel. 1658.

111. Vidi etiam senem Livium, qui usque ad adolescentiam meam processit ætate. *De Senectute*, c. 14.

112. Signorelli, *Storia de Teatri*, Tom. II.

113. Lib. XXVII. c. 37.

114. *Analecta Critica poesis Romanorum Scænicæ Reliquias lllustrantia*, c. 3. ed. Berlin, 1816.

115. Est enim inter scriptores de numero annorum controversia. Cicero, *Brutus*, c. 18. Cicero, however, fixes on the year 514, following, as he says, the account of his friend Atticus.

116. Livy, Lib. VII. c. 2. Quum sæpius revocatus vocem obtudisset, veniâ petitâ, puerum ad canendum ante tibicinem quum statuisset, canticum egisse, aliquanto magis vigente motu, quia nihil vocis usus impediebat.

117. Inde ad manum cantari histrionibus cœptum, diverbiaque tantum ipsorum voci relicta. —*Ibid.*

118. Festus, voce *Scribas*.

119. Osannus, *Analecta Critica*, c. 3.

120. *Bibliotheca Latina*, Tom. III. Lib. IV. c. 1.

121. "Let the red buskin now your limbs invest,
And the loose robe be belted to your breast;
The rattling quiver let your shoulders bear—
Throw off the hounds which scent the secret lair."

122. Jos. Scaliger, *Lectionibus Ausonianis*, where the lines are attributed to Lævius. ap. Sagitarius, *de Vita L. Andronici*, c. 8. Osannus, *Analecta Critica*, c. 2. p. 36. Some verses in the *Carmen de Arte Metrica* of Terentianus Maurus, are the chief authority for these hexameters being by Livius:—

"Livius ille vetus Grajo cognomine, suæ
Inserit Inonis versu, puto, tale docimen,
Præmisso heroo subjungit namque μειουρον,
Hymno quando Chorus festo canit ore Triviæ—
'Et jam purpureo,' " &c.

123. Livianæ fabulæ non satis dignæ quæ iterum legantur. *Brutus*, c. 18.

124. *Epist.* Lib. II. Ep. 1. v. 69.

125. *Brutus*, c. 18.

126. —— "Nought worse can be
For wearing out a man than the rough sea;
Even though his force be great, and heart be brave,
All will be broken by the vexing wave."

127. Au. Gellius, Lib. XVII. c. 21. Ed. Lugd. Bat. 1666.

128. *Tuscul. Disput.* Lib. IV. c. 31.

129. "—— My spirits, sire, are raised,
Thus to be praised by one the world has praised."

130. Au. Gellius. Lib. III. c. 3. Vossius. *De Historicis Latinis*, Lib. I. c. 2.

131. Hieronym. *Chronicum Eusebianum*, p. 37, ut supra.

132. Cicero, *Brutus*, c. 15.

133. Au. Gellius, Lib. I. c. 24.

134. "If blest immortals mortals might bemoan,
Each heavenly Muse would Nævius' loss deplore:
Soon as his spirit to the shades had flown,
In Rome the Roman tongue was heard no more."

135. Heyne, *Excurs.* 1. ad Lib. II. *Æneid.*

136. Id. ad Æneid. The Cyprian Iliad had long been almost universally ascribed to Nævius, and lines were quoted from it as his by all the old grammarians. Several modern German critics, however, think that it was the work of Lævius, a poet who lived some time after Nævius, since the lines preserved from the Cyprian Iliad are hexameters,—a measure not elsewhere used by Nævius, nor introduced into Italy, according to their supposition, before the time of Ennius. Osannus, *Analecta Critica*, p. 36. Herman, *Elementa Doctrinæ Metricæ*, p. 210. Ed. Glasg. 1817.

137. *De Senectute*. c. 14.

138. Suetonius, *De Illust. Grammat.*

139. Servius, *Ad Æneid.* Lib. 1.

140. *Saturnalia*, Lib. VI. c. 2. Ed. Lugduni, 1560. I am anxious to take this opportunity of remarking, that the books and chapters of the *Saturnalia* of Macrobius are differently divided in different editions. The same observation applies to many of the books most frequently referred to in the course of this work, as Pliny's Natural History, Aulus Gellius, and Cicero. This difference in the division of chapters, I fear, has led to a suspicion with regard to the accuracy of a few of my references, which, however, have been uniformly verified on some edition or other, though I cannot pretend that I have always had access to the best.

141. *Brutus*, c. 19.

142. Fortunatianus. Edit. Putsch. p. 2679. Bentley, *Dissert. on Phalaris*, p. 162. Hawkins, *Inquiry into the Nature of Latin Poetry*, p. 452. Ed. Lond. 1817.

143. Merula, Ed. Ennii Fragm. p. 88. Herman, *Elementa Doct. Met.* p. 395.

144. Cicero, *Brutus*, c. 18. Id. *De Senect.* c. 5.

145. Sil. Ital. Lib. XII.

146. Aurelius Victor says he taught Cato Greek in Sardinia, (In prætură Sardiniam subegit, ubi ab Ennio Græcis literis institutus;) but this is inconsistent with what is related by Cicero, that Cato did not acquire Greek till old age. (*De Senectute*, c. 8.)

147. Cornelius Nepos, *In Vita Catonis*.

148. Hieron. *Chron. Euseb.* p. 37.

149. Cicero, *Pro Archia*, c. 10. *Tusc. Disput.* Lib. I. c. 2.

150. Cicero, *Brutus*, c. 20.

151. Claudian, *de Laud. Stilichonis*, Lib. III. Præf.

152. Müller thinks it was in Sardinia he served under Africanus. *Einleitung zu Kentniss Lateinischen Schriftsteller*, Tom. I. p. 378. Ed. Dresden, 1747–51.

153. Cicero, *De Orat.* Lib. II. c. 68.

154. Horat. *Epist.* Lib. I. Ep. 19. v. 7.

155. Ser. Sammonicus, *de Medicina*, c. 37.

156. Annos septuaginta natus, ita ferebat duo, quæ maxima putantur onera, paupertatem et senectutem, ut iis pæne delectari videretur. *De Senectute*, c. 5.

157. Cicero, *pro Archia*, c. 9. Valerius Maximus, Lib. VIII. c. 15. § 1.

158. Lib. XXXVIII. c. 56.

159. Bankes, *Civil History of Rome*, Vol. I. p. 357. Hobhouse, *Illustrations of Childe Harold*, p. 167.

160. *Rome in the 19th Century*, Letter 36.

161. Cicero, *Tuscul. Disput.* Lib. I. c. 15.

162. "Romans, the form of Ennius here behold,

Who sung your fathers' matchless deeds of old.
My fate let no lament or tear deplore,
I live in fame, although I breathe no more."

163. See above, p. 61.

164. Alcmæon olim tragicorum pulpita lassavit cum furore suo. Ba. *in Statium*. Tom. II.

165. Those who wish more particulars concerning the necklace may consult Bayle, Art. *Calirhoe*.

166. *Tuscul. Disput.* Lib. III. c. 19.

167. "Where shall I refuge seek or aid obtain?
In flight or exile can I safety gain?—
Our city sacked—even scorched the walls of stone.
Our fanes consumed, and altars all o'erthrown.
O Father—country—Priam's ruined home;
O hallowed temple with resounding dome,
And vaulted roof with fretted gold illumed—
All now, alas! these eyes have been consumed:
Have seen the foe shed royal Priam's blood,
And stain Jove's altar with the crimson flood."

168. This subject is fully discussed in Eberhardt, *Zustand der Schönen Wissenschaften bei den Römern*, p. 38. Ed. Altona, 1801.

169. *Tuscul. Disput.* Lib. I. c. 16.

170. "I come—retraced the paths profound that lead
Through rugged caves, from mansions of the dead:
Mid these huge caverns Cold and Darkness dwell,
And Shades pass through them from the gates of Hell—
When roused from rest, by blood of victims slain,
The Sorcerer calls them forth with rites obscene."

171. *Græcæ Tragœdiæ principum Æschyli, &c. num ea quæ supersunt genuina omnia sunt*. Ed. Heidelberg, 1808.

172. "Who knows not leisure to enjoy,
Toils more than those whom toils employ;
For they who toil with purposed end,
Mid all their labours pleasure blend—
But they whose time no labours fill,
Have in their minds nor wish nor will:
'Tis so with us, called far from home,
Nor yet to fields of battle come—
We hither haste, then thither go,
Our minds veer round as breezes blow."

173. Comment. ad Cic. *Ep. ad Fam.* VII. 6. See also Scaliger, Vossius, &c.

174. Osannus, *Analecta Critica*, c. 5.

175. "I rear'd him, subject to death's equal laws,
And when to Troy I sent him in our cause,
I knew I urged him into mortal fight,
And not to feasts or banquets of delight."

176. "For no Marsian augur (whom fools view with awe,)
Nor diviner nor star-gazer, care I a straw;
The Egyptian quack, an expounder of dreams,
Is neither in science nor art what he seems;
Superstitious and shameless, they prowl through our streets,
Some hungry, some crazy, but all of them cheats.
Impostors! who vaunt that to others they'll show
A path, which themselves neither travel nor know.
Since they promise us wealth, if we pay for their pains,
Let them take from that wealth, and bestow what remains."

177. "Yes! there are gods; but they no thought bestow
On human deeds—on mortal bliss or woe—
Else would such ills our wretched race assail?
Would the good suffer?—would the bad prevail?"

178. *Instit. Orator.* Lib. X. c. 1.

179. *Noctes Atticæ*, Lib. II. c. 29.

180. Lib. IV. Fab. 22. *L'Alouette et ses petits avec le maitre d'un champ*.

181. *Noct. Attic.* Lib. XVII. c. 21. Quibus consulibus natum esse Q. Ennium poetam, M. Varro, in primo *de Poetis* libro, scripsit: eumque quum septimum et sexagesimum annum ageret duodecimum Annalem scripsisse: idque ipsum Ennium in eodem libro dicere.

182. See above, p. 40.

183. *Romische Geschichte*, Tom. I. p. 179.

184. *Romische Geschichte*, Tom. I. p. 318.

185. Id. Tom. I. p. 178.

186. *Romische Geschichte*, Tom. I. p. 364, &c.

187.

"'Eurydice, my sister,' thus she spoke,
When roused from sleep she, weeping, silence broke—
'Thou whom my father loved! of life bereft,
Though yet alive, all sense this frame hath left.
A form endowed with more than mortal grace,
Mysterious led me, and with hurried pace,
'Mid ever varying scenes, as wild as new,
O'er banks and meads where pliant osiers grew.
Then left to wander pathless and alone,
I vainly sought thee amid scenes unknown.
My father called, his child forlorn address'd,
And in these words prophetic thoughts express'd:
'O Daughter, many sorrows yet abide,
Ere fortune's stream upbears thee on its tide.'
Thus spoke my father; but his form withdrew;
No longer offered to my eager view.
Though oft in vain with soothing voice I call,
And stretch my hands to heaven's cerulean hall.
Oppressed, and struggling, and with sick'ning heart.
At once the vision and my sleep depart.'"

188.

"With ceaseless care, eager alike to reign,
Both anxious watch some favouring sign to gain,
Remus with prescient gaze observes the sky
Apart, and marks where birds propitious fly.
His godlike brother on the sacred height,
Observant traced the soaring eagle's flight:
And now the anxious tribes expect from fate
The future monarch of their infant state;
Even as the crowd await at festal games
The consul's signal, which the sports proclaims.
Their eyes directed to the painted goal,
Eager to see the rival chariots roll.
Meanwhile the radiant sun sinks down to night,
But soon he sheds again the yellow light;
And while the golden orb ascends the sky,
The fowls of heaven on wing propitious fly.
Twelve sacred birds, which gods as omens send,
With flight precipitate on earth descend.
The sign, Quirinus knew, to him alone
Presaged dominion, and the Roman throne."

189. The Annals were not separated by Ennius himself into books; but were so divided, long after his death, by the grammarian Q. Vargunteius.—(Suet. *de Illust. Gram.* c. 2.) The fragments of them are arranged under different books in different editions. In the passages quoted, I have followed the distribution in the edition of Merula, Lugd. Bat. 1574.

190.

"Nor gift I seek, nor shall ye ransom yield;
Let us not trade, but combat in the field:
Steel and not gold our being must maintain,
And prove *which* nation Fortune wills to reign.
Whom chance of war, despite of valour, spared,
I grant them freedom, and without reward.
Conduct them then, by all the mighty Gods!
Conduct them freely to their own abodes."

191. Cap. 19.

192. Gaddius, *de Script. Latinis non Ecclesiast.* Tom. 1. p. 171.

193.

"His friend he called—who at his table fared,
And all his counsels and his converse shared;
With whom he oft consumed the day's decline
In talk of petty schemes, or great design,—

To him, with ease and freedom uncontrouled,
His jests and thoughts, or good or ill, were told:
Whate'er concerned his fortunes was disclosed,
And safely in that faithful breast reposed.
This chosen friend possessed a stedfast mind,
Where no base purpose could its harbour find;
Mild, courteous, learned, with knowledge blest, and sense;
A soul serene, contentment, eloquence;
Fluent in words or sparing, well he knew
All things to speak in place and season due;
His mind was amply graced with ancient lore,
Nor less enriched with modern wisdom's store:
Him, while the tide of battle onward pressed,
Servilius called, and in these words addressed."

194. "Sacked, but not captive,—burned, yet not consumed;
Nor on the Dardan plains to moulder doomed."

195. "From every side the javelins as a shower
Rush, and unerring on the Tribune pour;
Struck by the spears his helm and shield resound,
Though pierced his shield, no shaft inflicts a wound.
Their missile darts th' embattled Istrians throw,
But all are hurled in vain against their foe;
He pants, and sweats, and labours o'er the field,
The flying shafts no pause for breathing yield;
Smote by his sword or sling, th' assailants fall
Within, or headlong thrust beyond the wall."

196. "Even as the generous Steed, whose youthful force
Was oft victorious in th' Olympic course,
Unfit, from age, to triumph in such fields,
At length to rest his time-worn members yields."

197. "O'er Heaven's wide arch a solemn silence reigned,
And the fierce Ocean his wild waves restrained:
The Sun repressed his steeds' impetuous force;
The winds were hushed; the streams all stayed their course."

198. Lib. IV. Ode 8.

199. Niebuhr, *Romische Geschichte*.

200. Vossius, *de Historicis Latinis*, Lib. I. c. 2.

201. Au. Gellius, *Noct. Attic.* Lib. XVIII. c. 5.

202. Ibid. Lib. XII. c. 2.

203. "Even as the generous steed, with reins unbound,
Bursts from the stall, and scours along the ground,
With lofty chest he seeks the joyous plain,
And oft, exulting, shakes his crested mane;
The fiery spirit in his breast prevails,
And the warm heart in sprinkling foam exhales."

204. Iliad, Lib. VI. v. 506.

205. Æneid, Lib. XI.

206. C. ix. st. 75.

207. *Venus and Adonis*, p. 13. Shakespeare's Poems, Ed. 1773.

208. *Voyage d'Anacharsis*. T. II. c. 25.

209. Varro, *De Re Rustica*, Lib. I. c. 4. Ed. Gesner.

210. This is the Jupiter whom all revere,
Whom I name Jupiter, and Greeks call Air:
He also is the Wind, the Clouds, the Rain;
Cold, after Showers, then Wind and Air again:
All these are Jove, who social life maintains,
And the huge monsters of the wild sustains.

211. Lib. VI. c. 1. & 2.

212. "He first restored the state by wise delay,
Heedless of what a censuring world might say;
Hence time has hallow'd his immortal name,
And, as the years succeed, still spreads his fame."

The line of Ennius, “Unus homo,” &c. was applied, with an alteration of the word *cunctando* into *vigilando*, by Augustus, in a complimentary letter to Tiberius, on his good conduct in restoring affairs in Germany, after the unfortunate defeat of Varus. (Sueton. *in Tiberio*. c. 21.)

213. It is of these two lines of Ennius that Horace says, the *disjecta membra poetæ*, that is, the poetical force and spirit, would remain, though the arrangement of the words were changed, and the measure of the verse destroyed; which, he admits, would not be the case with his own satires, or those of Lucilius.

214. Act. II. sc. 2.

215.
> “The Olympian Father smiled; and for a while
> Nature’s calmed elements returned the smile.”

216. *Scaligerana*, p. 136. Ed. Cologne, 1695.

217. *Institut. Orat.* Lib. X. c. 1.

218. Cicero, *De Divinatione*, Lib. II. c. 54.

219. *Divine Legation of Moses*.

220. *De Iside et Osiride*.

221. *Georg.* Lib. II. v. 139.

222. *Mem. de l’Acad. des Inscriptions*, Tom. XV.

223. Polyb. Lib. V.

224. *Cours de Litterature Dramatique*, Tom. I.

225. In this feature of their character the Athenians had a considerable resemblance to the French, during their most brilliant and courtly era. “Comment,” said a French courtier of the age of Louis XIV., on hearing of a good joke which had been uttered on occasion of a great national calamity;—“Comment, ne serait on charmé des grands evenemens, des bouleversemens mêmes qui font dire de si jolis mots.”—“On suivit,” says Chamfort, “cette idée, on repassa les mots, les chansons, faites sur tous les desastres de la France. La chanson sur la bataille de Hochstet fut trouvée mauvaise, et quelques uns dirent à ce sujet: Je suis faché de la perte de cette bataille; la chanson ne vaut rien.”—*Maximes, Pensées, &c.* par Chamfort, p. 190.

226. Au. Gellius, *Noct. Att.* Lib. III. c. 3.

227. Signorelli, *Storia di Teatri*. Tom. II. p. 32.

228. Lib. III.

229. *Poet.* XII.

230.
> “Faciam ut commixta sit tragico comœdia;
> Nam me perpetuo facere ut sit comœdia,
> Reges quo veniant et Dii, non par arbitror.
> Quid igitur? quoniam hic servus quoque parteis habet,
> Faciam sit, proinde ut dixi, tragi-comœdia.”

231. *Sat.* Lib. XXVIII.

232. Walker’s *Essay on the Revival of the Drama in Italy*.

233. Fabricius, *Biblioth. Græc.* Lib. II. c. 22.

234. A Latin prose comedy, entitled *Querulus seu Aulularia*, having been found in one of the most ancient MSS. of Plautus discovered in the Vatican, was by some erroneously attributed to that dramatist; though, in his prologue, its author quotes Cicero, and expressly declares, that he purposed to imitate Plautus! It was first edited in 1564 by Peter Daniel; and is now believed to have been written in the time of the Emperor Theodosius. In some respects it has an affinity to the genuine *Aulularia* of Plautus. The prologue is spoken by the *Lar Familiaris*; and a miser, called Euclio, on going abroad, had concealed a treasure, contained in a pot, in some part of his house. While dying, in a foreign land, he bequeathed to a parasite, who had there insinuated himself into his favour, one half of his fortune, on condition that he should inform his son Querulus, so called from his querulous disposition, of the place where his treasure was deposited. The parasite proceeds to the miser’s native country, and attempts, though unsuccessfully, to defraud the son of the whole inheritance.

From a curious mistake, first pointed out by Archbishop Usher, in his *Ecclesiastical Antiquities*, this drama was attributed to Gildas, the British Jeremiah, as Gibbon calls him; who entitled one of his complaints concerning the affairs of Britain, *Querulus*.—Vossius, *de Poet. Lat.* Lib. I. c. 6. § 9.

235. Walker’s *Essay on the Italian Drama*, p. 224.

236. P. 106. Ed. 1819.—I have often wondered, that while the character of a Miser has been exhibited so frequently, and with such success, on the stage, it should scarcely have been

well delineated, so far as I remember, in any novel of note, except, perhaps, in the person of Mr. Briggs, in *Cecilia*.

237. Act II. sc. 7.

238. Cailhava, *L'Art de la Comedie*, Liv. II. c. 9. Ed. Paris, 1772.

239. *Beytrage, zur Historie und Aufnahme des Theaters*.

240. *Samtliche Schriften*, Tom. XXII. p. 316.

241. Lib. VI. c. 9.

242. Id. Lib. VI. c. 7.

243. The best notion of the Greek parasite is to be got in the fragments of the Greek poets quoted by Athenæus, and in the Letters of Alciphron, a great number of which are supposed to be addressed by parasites to their brethren, and relate the particulars of the injurious treatment which they had received at the tables of the Great.

244. Athenæus, Lib. VI. c. 17.

245. Jul. Pollux, *Onomasticon*, Lib. IV. c. 18

246. Huic denique manducanti barba vellitur; illi bibenti sedilia subtrahuntur; hic ligno scissili, ille fragili vitro pascitur.

247. See Act ii. sc. 2. and Act iv. sc. 1.

248. Potter's *Antiquities of Greece*. Book IV. c. 14.

249. *Tableau de la Litterature Francoise*.

250. Alciphron, *Epist.*

251. Walker's *Essay on the Revival of the Drama in Italy*.

252. Le Grand, *Contes et Fabliaux*, Tom. III. p. 157.

253. Quintil. *Inst. Orat.* Lib. X, c. 1.

254. Reperias, apud illum, multos sales, argumenta lepide inflexa, agnatos lucide explicatos, personas rebus competentes; joca non infra Soccum—seria non usque ad Cothurnum. Raræ apud illum corruptelæ; et uti errores concessi amores.—Apuleius, *Florid.* p. 553.

255. Müller, *Einleitung zu Kenntniss der alten Lateinischen Schriftsteller*, Tom. II. p. 38.

256. *Epist.* 362.

257. *Opera*, Vol. I. p. 721.

258. See on this subject three German Programmata by M. Bellermann, published 1806, 7, 8; also Schoell, *Hist. Abregée de la Litter. Rom.* Tom. I. p. 123.—Col. Vallancey, in his *Essay on the Antiquity of the Irish Language*, (which attracted considerable attention on its first publication, and has been recently reprinted,) attempted to show the affinity between these Punic remains and the old Irish language,—both, according to him, having been derived from the Phœnician, which was itself a dialect of the Hebrew.

259. C. 14.

260. G. Dousa, *Centur.* Lib. III. c. 2.

261. *Œuvres D'Horace, par Dacier*, Tom. IX. p. 93. Ed. 1727

262. See above, p. 129.

263. *Essay on Dramatic Poetry*.

264. *Essay on Dramatic Poetry*.

265. *Heautontim.* Act III. sc. 2.

266. Athenæus, Lib. XIII. Alciphron's *Epist.*

267. De Pauw, *Recherches Philosophiques sur les Grecs*, Vol. I. p. 188.

268. Cicero, *de Senectute*, c. 14.

269. *Noct. Att.* Lib. III. c. 3.

270. *Noct. Att.* Lib. III. c. 3.

271. *Satur.* Lib. II. c. 1.

272. Nam Plautum alii dicunt scripsisse Fabulas XXI. alii XL. alii C. Serv. *Ad Virg. Æneid.* Init.

273. *Noct. Att.* Lib. III. c. 3.

274. Fabricius, *Bib. Latina*, Lib. I. c. 1. Osannus, *Analecta Critica*, c. 8.

275. *Noct. Att.* Lib. III. c. 3.

276. *Analect. Critic.* c. 8.

277. *Noct. Att.* Lib. III. c. 2.

278. *Sunapothneskontes* Diphili Comœdia 'st: Eam Commorientes Plautus fecit Fabulam.

279. We have the opinions of Varro concerning the plays of Plautus only at second hand. The work in which they are delivered, is lost; but they are minutely reported in his *Attic Nights*, by Aulus Gellius.

280. Ap. Quintilian, *Inst. Orat.* Lib. X. c. 1.

281. "Immo illi proavi," says Camerarius, (*Dissert. de Comœd. Plauti*,) "meritò, et recte, ac sapienter Plautum laudarunt et admirati fuerunt: tuque ad Græcitatem, omnia, quasi regulam, poemata gentis tuæ exigens, immerito, et perperam, atque incogitanter culpas."—(See also J. C. Scaliger and Lipsius, *Antiq. Lect.* Lib. II. c. 1.; Turnebus, *Advers.* xxv. 16.; Flor. Sabinus, *Adversus Calumniatores Plauti*, Basil, 1540.) Dan. Heinsius attempted to defend the sentiment of Horace, in his *Dissertatio ad Horatii de Plauto et Terentio judicium*, printed at Amsterdam, 1618, with his edition of *Terence*; and was answered by Benedict Fioretti, in his *Apologia pro Plauto, opposita sævo judicio Horatiano et Heinsiano*.—See, finally, D. J. Tr. Danz, *De Virtute Comica Plauti*, in *Dissert. Philolog.* Jenæ, 1800.

282. Lib. II. c. 58.

283. Hurd's *Horace*. Gibbon's *Miscellaneous Works*, Vol. IV.

284. "Duplex omnino est jocandi genus; unum illiberale, petulans, obscœnum, alterum elegans, urbanum, ingeniosum, facetum; quo genere non modo Plautus noster, et Atticorum antiqua comœdia, sed etiam Philosophorum Socraticorum libri sunt referti."—*De Officiis*, Lib. I. c. 29.

285. Athenæus, Lib. XIII. c. 1.

286. Au. Gellius, *Noct. Att.* Lib. IV. c. 20.

287. *Brutus*, c. 74. Cæcilium et Pacuvium male locutos videmus.

288. *Histor. Roman.* Lib. I. c. 17.

289. *Noct. Attic.* Lib. II. c. 23.

290. *Brutus*, c. 45. L. Afranius poeta, homo perargutus; in fabulis quidem etiam, ut scitis, disertus.

291. *Instit. Orat.* Lib. X. c. 1. To this charge Ausonius also alludes, though with little reprehension,

> "Præter legitimi genitalia fœdera cœtûs,
> Repperit obscænas veneres vitiosa libido;
> Herculis heredi quam Lemnia suasit egestas,
> Quam toga facundi scenis agitavit Afranî."
> *Epigram.* 71.

292. Spence's *Polymetis*.

293.
> "Could men to love be lured by magic rites,
> Each crone would with a lover sooth her nights:
> A tender form, and youth, and gentle smiles,
> Are the sweet potion which the heart beguiles."

294. Eunuchus, *Prolog.*

295. Donatus, *Comment. in Terent. Eunuch. Prolog.*

296.
> "I swell with such gladness my brain almost turns,
> And my bosom with thoughts of my happiness burns.
> The portress compliant—the way cleared before—
> A touch of my finger throws open the door:
> Then, Chrysis—fair Chrysis, will rush to my arms,
> Will court my caresses, and yield all her charms.
> Such transport will seize me when this comes to pass,
> I'll Fortune herself in good fortune surpass."

297.
> "O, could complaints or tears avail
> To cure those ills which life assail,
> Even gold would not be price too dear
> At which to win a healing tear.
> But, since the tears by sorrow shed
> Are vain as dirge to wake the dead,
> In prudent care, and not in grief,
> All human ills must find relief."

298. *Carmina*, 45. Ed. 1718.

299. Donatus, *Vit. Terent.*

300. Tiraboschi, *Storr. Dell. Lett. Ital.* Part III. Lib. II. c. 1. Arnaud, *Gazette Litteraire*, 1765.

301. Goujet, *Bib. Franc.* Tom. IV. Sulzer relates this story of Terence and the ædile Cerius, to

whose review the *Andria* had been subjected.—*Theorie der Schönen Künste*, Tom. IV. *Terenz*.

302. Donatus, *Vit. Terent.*

303. *Cours de Litterature*.

304. Colman's *Terence*.

305. *Satir.* III.

306. *Spectator*, No. 170.

307. *Poet.* Lib. VI. c. 3.

308. Signorelli, *Storia de Teatri*, Tom. II. p. 129.

309. No. 562.

310. Schmieder—Terenz. Halle, 1794.

311. *Miscellaneous Works*, Vol. IV. p. 140.

312. *Adelph.* Act 4. sc. 7.

313. *Ecole des Maris*, Act 1. sc. 2.

314. Page 115.

315. Spence's *Anec.* p. 115.

316. Act 1. sc. 1.

317. *Prolog. in Hecyr.* and Donati *Comment.*

318. Alciphron, *Epistolæ*.

319. Act 1. sc. 2.

320. Boileau.

321. Hurd's *Horace*, Vol. II.

322. Boileau.

323. *Protrepticon. Eidyll.* IV. v. 58.

324. See Blankenburg's *Zusätze zu Sulzer's Theorie der Schönen Wissenschaften*.

325. *Element. Doct. Met.* Lib. II. c. 14.

326. "Plus est," says Erasmus, "exacti judicii in unâ comœdiâ Terentianâ quam in Plautinis omnibus," (B. 28. Epist. 20.) Naugerius, in his fourth Epistle, has instituted a comparison between Plautus and Terence, much to the advantage of the latter, and has expressed himself in terms of strong indignation at the well-known verses of Volcatius Sedigitus, assigning the second place among the Latin comic poets to Plautus, and the sixth to Terence.

327. *Hist. de la Litterature Espagnole*, traduite de l'Allemand de Bouterweck. Vol. I. p. 339. Ed. 1812.

328. Plinius, *Hist. Nat.* Lib. XXXV. c. 4.

329. This story is told of a Sicilian by Cicero, (*De Orat.* II.)

330. Plin. *Hist. Nat.* Lib. XXXV. c. 4.

331. Cicero, *Brutus*, c. 63.

332. *Noct. Attic.* Lib. XIII. c. 2.

333. Hieron. *Chron.* p. 39. ed. ut supra.

334. *Noct. Att.* Lib. I. c. 24.

335.

> "O, youth! though haste should urge thee hence away,
> To read this stone thy steps one moment stay:
> That here Pacuvius' bones are laid to tell
> I wished, that thou might'st know it—Fare thee well."

Dr Johnson has laid it down as the first rule in writing epitaphs, that the name of the deceased should not be omitted; but it seems rather too much to occupy four lines with nothing but this information.

336. *Brutus*, c. 74.

337. *Inst. Orat.* Lib. X. c. 1.

338. Eberhardt, *Zustand der Schönen Wissenschaften, bei den Römern*, p. 35 &c. Ed. Altona, 1801.

339. *Stor. dell. Litterat. Ital.* Part III. Lib. II. c. 1. § 20.

340.

> "Dum fallax servus, durus pater, improba lena
> Vivent, dum meretrix blanda, Menandrus erit."

341. Cicero, *Brutus*, c. 63.

342. Lib. III. c. 7.

343. *Brutus*, c. 28.

344. *Noct. Att.* Lib. XIII. c. 2.

345. Plin. *Hist. Nat.* Lib. XXXIV. c. 5.

346. *Rhetoric. ad Herennium*, Lib. I. c. 14, and Lib. II. c. 13.

347. Cicero, *pro Archia*, c. 10. Valer. Maxim. Lib. VIII. c. 15.

348. Quintilian, *Inst. Orat.* Lib. V. c. 13.

349. Ovid, *Trist.* Lib. II.

350.

> "This dwelling of nine winters' grief behold,
> Where stretch'd on rock my sad sojourn I hold.
> Around the boisterous north-wind ceaseless blows.
> And, while it rages, drifts the gelid snows."

351. *Ars Poetica*, v. 286.

352. Torq. Baden, in a small tract, entitled *De Causis neglectæ apud Romanos tragœdiæ*, (Gœtting. 1790,) almost entirely attributes the deficiency of the Romans in tragedy to their want of a set of heroes, who were poetically consecrated by any epic productions, like those by which Homer had so highly elevated the Grecian chiefs.

353. *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Part VI. c. 1.

354. *Cours de Litter. Dramat.* Leçon. VIII.

355. *De Divinat.* Lib. II. c. 50.

356. Hurd's *Horace*, Vol. II.

357. Horat. *Epist.* Lib. II. Ep. 1. v. 67.

358. Horat. *Epist.* Lib. II. ep. 1.

359. Cicero.—*Epistolæ familiares*, Lib. VII. ep. 1. Ed. Schütz.

360. Horat. *Epist.* Lib. II. 1.

361. *Tuscul. Disput.* Lib. I, c. 2.

362. Plautus—*Menæchmi*. Prolog.

363. Delectabatur veteri comœdia, et sæpe eam exhibuit publicis spectaculis. Suetonius, *In August.* c. 89.

364. *Correspondence*, &c. p. 205. Lond. 1813.

365. *Ars Poetica*, v. 288.

366. See Dubos, *Reflex. sur la Poésie*. Jul. Pollux, *Onomasticon*.

367. Livy, Lib. VII. c. 2.

368. Ibid.

369. Jul. Pollux, *Onomasticon*. Festus ap. *Vossius de Poet. Lat.* Lib. II. c. 35, § 8.

370. Casaubon, *de Satyrica Poes.* Lib. II. c. 1. Signorelli, *Stor. de Teat.* Tom. II. p. 14. This, however, is not very likely. The deference was probably paid, because young patricians chose to act in the Atellanes: It could not otherwise have been thought more creditable to personate the clown or fool of a semi-barbarous race, than to perform the parts of Œdipus and Agamemnon.

371. Diomed. de *Poem. Gen.* Lib. III.

372. *Epist. Quæst.* Lib. XI. *Quæst.* 22.

373. Du Bos, *Reflex. Critiques*, Tom. I. p. 154.

374. Lib. II. c. 9.

375. Lib. VI. c. 17.

376. Conferta fabellis potissimum Atellanis sunt. Livy, Lib. VII. c. 2.

377. Sulzer, *Theorie der Schönen Künste*, Lib. I. p. 520.

378. Juvenal, *Sat.* VI.

379. Exodiarius apud veteres in fine ludorum intrabat, quod ridiculus foret, ut, quidquid lachrymarum atque tristitiæ coegissent, ex tragicis affectibus, hujus spectaculi risus detergeret.—*Ad Juvenal. Satir. III.* v. 175.

380. *Poetices Libri*.

381. *De Sat. Horat.*

382. *De Sat. Latin.*

383. *Ad. Sulzer.*

384. *Geschichte der komischen Litteratur*.

385. Satira tota nostra est.

386. Lib. III.

387. *De Satir. Poes.*

388. *Dissertation sur les Cesars de Julien*.

389. *De Sat. Juvenalis*.

390. *Pref. sur les Sat. d'Horace*.

391. *De Sat. Romanâ*.

392. Virgil, *Georg.* Lib. II.

393. Juvenal. *Satir.* Lib. I. We shall afterwards see reason to conclude, that the famous *Satira Menippea* of Varro seems not to have been Satyra, but Satura, a hodge-podge, or medley.

394. Horat. *Epist.* Lib. II. ep. 1.

395. *Georg.* Lib. II. v. 385.

396. Horat. *Epist.* Lib. II. ep. 1.

397. Velleius Paterc. *Histor.* Lib. II. 9.

398. Ascon. Pedianus in *Comment. in Orat. Ciceronis cont. L. Pisonem*.

399. Horat. *Sat.* Lib. II. 1. v. 71.

400. Ibid. v. 30.

401. *Dict. Hist. Lucil. G.*

402. Schoell, *Hist. Abregée de la Litterat. Romaine*, Tom. I.

403. Horat. *Sat.* Lib. I. *Sat.* 4. v. 1. &c.

404. *Satir.* Lib. I. Sat. 4. v. 9.

405. *Præf. Hist. Nat.*

406. *De Finibus*, Lib. I.

407. *Epist. Familiares*, Lib. IX. 15.

408. *Satur.* Lib. III. c. 16.

409. Lucilius vir apprime linguæ Latinæ sciens. Au. Gellius, *Noct. Attic.* Lib. XVIII. c. 5. Horat. *Sat.* Lib. I. 10.

> —— "Fuerit Lucilius, inquam,
> Comis et urbanus; fuerit limatior idem
> Quam rudis, et Græcis intacti carminis auctor:—
> Quamque poetarum seniorum turba."

410. *Instit. Orat.* Lib. X. c. 1.

411. Auson. *in Epist.* 5. ad Theonem.

412. Lib. I. c. 16, and Lib. II. Caius Lucilius homo *doctus* et perurbanus.

413. Gifford's *Juvenal*, Preface, p. xlii.

414. Persius, *Sat.* I.

415. Au. Gellius, XVII. 21.

416. Horat. *Sat.* Lib. II. 1.

417. *Rhetoric. ad Herennium*, Lib. II. c. 13.

418. *Juvenal*, *Sat.* Lib. I. v. 153.

419. *Divin. Instit.* Lib. V. c. 15.

420. Porphyrion, *In Horat.* Lib. I. Ode 20.

421.

> "They dread hobgoblins hatch'd in folly's brain,
> The idle phantoms of old Numa's reign.
> As infant children sculptured forms believe
> To be live men—so they themselves deceive—
> To whom vain forms of superstition's dream
> Of Life and truth the real figures seem.
> Fools! they as well might think there stirs a heart,
> Of vital power, in images of art."

422. “In various fights the Roman arms have failed;
Still in the war the Roman power prevailed.”

423. “Virtue, Albinus, is—A constant will
The claims of duty ably to fulfil—
Virtue is knowledge of the just, sincere,
The good, the ill, the useless, base, unfair.
What we should wish to gain, for what to pray,
This virtue teaches, and each vow to pay;
Honour she gives to whom it may belong,
But hates the base, and flies from what is wrong—
A bold protector of the just and pure,
She feels for such a friendship fond and sure—
Her country’s good commands her warmest zeal.
Kindred the next, and latest private weal.”

424. *Div. Instit.* Lib. VI. c. 5 and 6.

425. Horat. *Sat.* Lib. II. 1.

426. Concerning Varro Atacinus, see Wernsdorff, *Poet. Lat. Minor.* Tom. VI. p. 1385, &c. Ed. Altenburg, 1780.

427. Wernsdorff, *Poet. Lat. Minores*, *Præf.* Tom. III. p. LIV. &c.

428. Ibid. p. 1.

429. “On half a pound three grains of barley bread,
With two small bunches of dried grapes, he fed,
And met old age beneath a paltry shed.”

430. *Epist. Famil.* Lib. XIII.

431. Good’s *Lucretius. Pref.* p. XXXVI.

432. “Nam neque nos agere hoc patriäi tempore iniquo
Possumus æquo animo,” &c.—Lib. I. v. 42.

433. *Letter on Bowles’s Strictures on Pope*.

434. “Ἰδον γαρ σκοπιην ἐς παιπαλοεσσαν ἀνελθων,
Νησον, την περι ποντος απειριτος ἐστεφανωται·
Ἀυτη δε χθαμαλη κεῖται καπνον δ’ ενι μεσσῃ
Εδρακον οφθαλμοῖσι δια δρυμα πυκνα και ὑλην.”
Οδυσ. Κ.

435. *Encyclopédie Methodique*.

436. *Reflexions sur la Poésie*. *Œuvres*, Tom. V.

437. *Inst. Orat.* Lib. X. c. 1.

438. Virgil. *Eclog.* 6.

439. Turner’s *History of the Anglo Saxons*, Vol. III. pp. 311, 356, ed. London, 1820, where proofs are given.

440. Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* Lib. II. 7.

441. “Neque enim assentior iis,” says Lælius, in Cicero’s Dialogue, *De Amicitia*, “qui hæc nuper disserere cœperunt, cum corporibus simul animos interire, atque omnia morte deleri.” (c. 4.)

442. “Priscarum religionum metus,” says Heyne, talking of the time of the civil wars of Sylla, “jam adeo dispulsus erat, ut ne ipsa quidem Loyolæ cohors immissa, novas tenebras, novos terrores offundere animis potuisset.” (*Opuscula*, Tom. IV.)

443. Lib. II. v. 43, 44, 45–60. It is well known what a clamour was excited against Epicurus, founded on the ambiguity of the word which has been translated pleasure, but which would be more accurately interpreted happiness. A similar outcry was, in later ages, raised by one of his opponents against Malebranche, who, like Epicurus, lived not merely temperately, but abstemiously. “Regis,” (says Fontenelle,) “attaqua Malebranche sur ce qu’il avoit avancé que *le plaisir rend heureux*. Ainsi malgré sa vie plus que philosophique et tres chrêtienne il se trouva le protecteur de plaisirs. A la verité la question devint si subtile et si metaphysique, que leurs plus grands partizans auroient mieux aimés y renoncer pour toute leur vie, que d’etre obligés à les soutenir comme lui.” *Eloges, Malebranche*.

444. *Literary Hours*, Vol. I. p. 11. Dr Drake wrote two essays, to announce and recommend the translation of Lucretius by his friend Mr Good. The latter, in his notes, displays a prodigious extent of reading in almost all languages; but neither of them is very accurate. Dr Drake, for example, remarks, “that the *Alieuticon* and *Cynegeticon* of Oppian, though conveying precepts in verse, can with scarce any probability be considered as furnishing

a model for the philosophic genius of the Roman." (P. 3.) Oppian wrote towards the close of the second century of the Christian æra. Mr Good also makes Suetonius appeal for some fact to Athenæus. (Vol. I. p. 25.)

445. As a specimen of rank Spinosism, we find—

> "All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
> Whose body Nature is, and God the soul;" ——

and for an apparent justification of crime,—

> "If plagues and earthquakes break not Heaven's design,
> Why, then, a Borgia or a Catiline.
> * * * *
> In spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,
> One truth is clear,—Whatever is, is right."

446. Apollonius Rhodius, Lib. I. Virgil, *Æneid*, Lib. I.

447. ap. Eichstadt. Lucret. p. lxxxvii. ci. cii. ed. Lips. 1801.

448. The fragments of Empedocles have been chiefly preserved by Simplicius, in a Greek commentary on Aristotle, written about the middle of the sixth century. This commentary, with the verses of Empedocles which it comprehended, was translated into Latin in the thirteenth century; and at the revival of literature, the original Simplicius having disappeared, it was as happened to various other works retranslated from the Latin into Greek, and in this form was printed by Aldus, in 1526. Sturz published the *Remains of Empedocles* from this Aldine edition, with a great literary apparatus, at Leipsic, in 1805, but with some remodelling, to force them into accurate verse, which they had lost in their successive transmutations. Subsequent, however, to this attempt, Professor Peyron discovered, in the Ambrosian library at Milan, the original Greek of Simplicius, with the genuine verses of Empedocles, which have been reprinted at Leipsic, in 1810, from the Italian edition.

449. Sturz, *Empedoclis Fragmenta*. Cicero, *De Finibus*, Lib. II.

450. "To those," says Warton, (*Essay on the Writings and Genius of Pope*, Vol. II. p. 402, note), "that know the number of thoughts that breathe, and words that burn, in this animated writer, it seems surprising, that Tully could speak of him in so cold and tasteless a manner." The opinion of Cicero, however, has been rendered unfavourable, only by the interpolation of the word *non*, contrary to the authority of all MSS. His words, in a letter to his brother Quintus, are "Lucretii poemata ut scribis ita sunt; multis luminibus ingenii, multæ tamen artis. (Lib. II. Epist. 11.)—The poems of Lucretius are as you write; with many beams of genius, yet also with much art."

451.

> "Nec me animi fallit, Graiorum obscura reperta,
> Difficile inlustrare Latinis versibus esse;
> Multa novis verbis præsertim quum sit agendum,
> Propter egestatem linguæ et rerum novitatem.
> * * *
> Deinde, quod obscurâ de re tam lucida pango
> Carmina, Musæo contingens cuncta lepore."

452. "In Lucretio maxime puritas Latinæ linguæ, copiaque apparet."—P. Victorius. *Var. Lect.* Lib. XVII. c. 16. "Lucretius Latinitatis author optimus."—Casaubon, *Not. in Johan.* cap. 5.

453.

> "Who combats bravely, is not therefore brave;
> He dreads a death-bed like a common slave."

454. Lib. I. El. iii. v. 37.

455. Lib. V. 24.

456. C. Nocet, *Iris* and *Aurora Borealis*—Le Febre, *Terræ Motus*—Souciet, *Cometæ*—Malapertus, *De Ventis*. These, and many other poems of a similar description, are published in the *Poemata Didascalica*. 3 Tom. Paris, 1813.

457. Cowper.

458. Barthii *Adversaria*, l. 38. c. 7. Funccius, *de Virili Ætate, Ling. Lat.* c. 3. Some critics, however, are of opinion that he was called Doctus from the correctness and purity of his Latin style. "Latinæ puritatis custos fuit religiosissimus, unde et *docti* cognomen meruit." (Car. Stephen.) Müller, a German writer, has a notable conjecture on this subject. He says, we will come nearest the truth, if we suppose that Ovid, while mentioning Catullus, applied to him the epithet *doctus* merely to fill up the measure of a line, and that his successors took up the appellation on trust.—(*Einleit. zur Kenntniss der Lateinisch. Schriftsteller*, T. II. p. 265.) Mr Elton thinks that the epithet did not mean what we understand by learned, but rather knowing and accomplished—what the old English authors signify by cunning, as cunning in music and the mathematics.—(*Specimens of the Classics*.) This conjecture seems to be in some measure confirmed by Horace's application of the term *doctus* to the actor Roscius:—

“Quæ gravis Æsopus, quæ doctus Roscius egit.”

The recent translator of Catullus conceives that the title of learned never belonged peculiarly to him, but was merely conferred on him in common with all poets, as it is now bestowed on all lawyers.

459. Catullus, in his miscellaneous poems, has employed not fewer than thirteen different sorts of versification.

1. That which is most frequently used is the Phalæcian hendecasyllable, consisting of a spondee, dactyl, and three trochees.

“Cui do | no lepi | dum no | vum li | bellum.”

This sort of measure has been adopted by Catullus in thirty-nine poems.

2. Trimeter iambus, consisting of six feet, which are generally all iambuses.

“Ait | fuis | se na | vium | celer | rimus;”

but a spondee sometimes forms the first, third, and fifth feet. Four poems are in this measure—the fourth, twentieth, twenty-ninth, and fifty-second.

3. Choliambus or scazon, which is the same with the last mentioned, except that the concluding foot of the line is always a spondee.

“Fulse | re quon | dam can | didi | tibi | soles.”

This metre is used seven times, being employed in the eighth, twenty-second, thirty-first, thirty-seventh, thirty-ninth, forty-fourth, and fifty-ninth poems.

4. Trochaic Stesichian, consisting of six feet—choreus or spondee, a dactyl, a cretic, a choreus or spondee, a dactyl, and lastly a choreus.

“Alter | parva fe | rens manu | semper | munera | larga.”

This measure appears only in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth poems.

5. Iambic tetrameter catalectic, formed of seven feet and a cæsura at the close of the line. It occurs in the twenty-fifth poem.

6. Choriambus. This also is employed but once, being used only in the thirtieth. It consists of five feet,—a spondee, three choriambi, and a pyrrhichius.

“Ventos | irrita fer | et nebulas | aerias | sinis.”

7. A sort of Phalæcian, consisting of two spondees and three chorei.

“Quas vul | tu vi | di ta | men se | reno.”

But it sometimes consists of a spondee and four chorei. This measure is adopted in some lines of the fifty-fifth ode.

8. Glyconian, generally made up of a spondee and two dactyles.

“Jam ser | vire Tha | lassio.”

but sometimes of a trochæus and two dactyles.

“Cinge | tempora | floribus.”

This sort of verse occurs, but mixed with other measures in the thirty-fourth ode, addressed to Diana, and also in the sixtieth.

9. Pherecratian, consisting of three feet, a trochee, spondee, or iambus in the first place, followed by a dactyl and spondee.

Exer | ceto ju | ventam
Frige | rans Aga | nippe
Hymen | O Hyme | næe.

This is used in the thirty-fourth and sixtieth, mingled with glyconian verse.

10. Galliambic. This is employed only in the poem of Atys, which indeed is the sole specimen of the galliambic measure, in the Latin language. It consists of six feet, which are used very loosely and indiscriminately. The first seems to be at pleasure, an anapæst, spondee, or tribrachys; second, an iambus, tribrachys, or dactyl; third, iambus or spondee; fourth, dactyl or spondee; fifth, a dactyl, or various other feet; sixth, generally an anapæst, but sometimes an iambus.

"Super alta vectus Atys celeri rate maria."

The remaining three species of measure employed by Catullus, are the sapphic stanza, used in the seventh and fifty-first odes; the hexameter lines, which we have in the epithalamium of *Peleus* and *Thetis*; and the pentameter lines, used alternately with the hexameters, and thereby constituting elegiac verse, which is employed in all the elegies of Catullus. Of these three measures, the structure is well known.—(Vulpius, *Diatribe de Metris Catulli*.)

460. *Verona Illustrata*, Parte II. c. 1. *Dict. Hist. Art. Catullus*.

461. *De Poet.* Dial. x.

462. Schoell, *Hist. Abreg. de la Litt. Rom.* T. I. p. 310.

463. *Handbuch der Classischen Litt.* T. I. p. 187.

464. *Saxii Onomasticon*, T. I. p. 148.

465. *Ep. ad Att.* XIII. 52.

466.

O blame not the bard, if he fly to the bowers,
Where Pleasure lies carelessly smiling at Fame;
He was born for much more, and in happier hours
His soul might have glowed with a holier flame.

MOORE.

467. Apuleius, *In Apologia*.

468. *Centur. Miscell.* I. c. 6.

469. Lib. XI. Ep. 7.

470. Lib. IV. Ep. 14.

471. Lib. I. Ep. 110.

472. Muret. *in Catull. Comment.*

473. Bayle, *Dict. Hist.* Art. *Barbara*.

474. *Amor*. Lib. II. eleg. 6.

475. *Sylv.* II. 3.

476. Lib. II. eleg. 7.

477. C. II.

478. Tibullus, Lib. I. El. 1.

479. Vol. III. p. 14, 2d. ed.

480. Lib. IX. v. 435.

481. Valerium Catullum, a quo sibi versiculis de Mamurrâ perpetua stigmata imposita non dissimulaverat, satisfacientem, *eâdem die* adhibuit cœnæ, hospitioque patris ejus, sicut consueverat, uti perseveravit.—Sueton. *In Cæsar.* c. 73.

482. Cicero, *Epist. ad Attic.* XIII. 52. Inde ambulavit in littore. Post horam viii. in balneum; tum audivit de Mamurrâ; vultum non mutavit; unctus est; accubuit.

483. *Syphilis*, Lib. I.

484. Colt Hoare's Continuat. of Eustace's Travels.

485. Henin, *Journal du Siege de Peschiera*.

486. *Classical Tour*, Vol. I. c. 5. 8vo edition.

487. In the year 1797, Buonaparte, who was at that time commander-in-chief of the army of Italy, visited in person this spot, which, during the life of Catullus, had been his retreat and sanctuary, even from the despotism of Cæsar. While travelling from Milan to Perseriano, to conclude the treaty of Campo Formio, he turned off from the road, between Brescia and Peschiera, to visit the peninsula of Sirmio. About two years afterwards, the French officers employed at the siege of Peschiera, which is eight miles distant from Sirmio, gave a brilliant *fête champêtre* in this classic retirement, in honour of Catullus, as soon as their military operations against Peschiera had been brought to a successful conclusion. General St Michel, who had conducted them, invited all the Polish officers who were present at the siege, and some of the inhabitants of Sirmio—particularly the dramatic poet, Anelli. During the repast, this bard, and the French generals, Lacombe and St Michel, sung and recited in turn verses of their own composition; and which flowed spontaneously, it is said by one who was present, from the inspiration of scenes so rich in poetic remembrances. The toasts were—*The Memory of Catullus*, the most elegant of Latin poets—*Buonaparte*, who honours great men amid the tumult of arms—who celebrated Virgil at Mantua, and paid homage to Catullus, by visiting the peninsula of Sirmio—*General Miollis*, the protector of sciences and fine arts in Italy. The festivities were here unpleasantly interrupted by the arrival of all the

uninvited inhabitants of Sirmio, who came to complain of having been pillaged by the detachment of French troops which had replaced the Austrian garrison. General Chasseloup received them with his accustomed urbanity; and, from respect to Catullus, the troops were marched from that canton to another district, which had not yet been plundered, and had not the good fortune to have been the residence of a licentious poet. —(Henin, *Jour. Historique des Operat. Militaires du Siege de Peschiera*.)

488. *Classical Tour*, Vol. II. c. 7.

489. *Travels through Holland, &c. but especially Italy*, Vol. II. chap. 39.

490. *Lettres sur l'Italie*, Tom. II. let. 36. Paris, 1819.

491. Nibby, in his *Viaggio Antiquario ne contorni di Roma*, (Ed. 1819. 2 Tom. 8vo,) in opposition to all previous authority, has denied that this was the site of the villa of Catullus, which he has removed to a spot due east from Tibur, between the Acque Albule and Ponte Lucano. His opinion, however, is rested on the 26th poem of Catullus, of which he has totally misunderstood the meaning,—

> "Furi, Villula nostra non ad Austri
> Flatus opposita est, nec ad Favoni,
> Nec sævi Boreæ, aut Apeliotæ;
> Verum ad millia quindecim et ducentos—
> O ventum horribilem atque pestilentem."

Nibby strangely supposes that the fourth line of the above verses means that the villa is 15 miles 200 paces from Rome, and, therefore, that it cannot be at St Angelo in Piavola, the distance of which from Rome is not 15 miles 200 paces.—"Questi versi," says he, "non solo non sono così decisìvi per situarla precisamente a St Angelo, piu tosto che in altri luoghi di questi contorni; ma assolutamente la escludono, poichè la stabaliscono quindìci miglia, e duecento passi vicino a Roma."—T. I. p. 166.

Now, in the first place, according to Muretus and the best commentators, this ode does not at all refer to the villa of Catullus, but of Furius, whom he addresses, since the correct reading in the first line is not Villula *nostra*, but *Vostra*. Allowing, however, that it should be *nostra*, it is quite impossible to extort from the fourth line any proof that the villa was 15 miles 200 paces from Rome. Translated *verbatim*, it is as follows:—"Furius, our (your) villa is not exposed or liable to the blasts of Auster or Favonius, or the sharp Boreas, or the Apeliot wind, but to fifteen thousand and two hundred—O horrible and pestilent wind!" Now, the question is, to *what* 15,000,200 is the villa exposed? (*opposita*). Every commentator whom I have consulted, supplies sesterces, or other pieces of money; that is to say, it was mortgaged or pledged for that sum, which would sweep it away more effectually than any wind. Nibby's interpretation, that it is not exposed to Auster or Boreas, &c. but is 15 miles 200 paces distant from Rome, is not many miles, or even paces, distant from absolute nonsense; and, moreover, quindecim millia, is not good Latin for 15 miles.

492. *Observ. Crit. in Catulli Carmina*.

493. Acte I. sc. 3.

494. *Dict. Philos.* Art. *Amplification*.

495. Ad Fauniam.

496. *Genethliacon pueri nobilis*.

497. See also Moschus, Idyl 7.

498. Gohorry.

499. Lib. III.

500. Aristotle, *Rhetor*. Lib. III. c. 3.

501. *Decline and fall of the Rom. Emp.* c. 23.

502. Fabricius, *Bib. Lat.*

503. Mitscherlichius, *in Lect. ad Catull.*

504. Eidul. IV. v. 21.

505. Lib. XII. v. 489.

506. Muretus, *Comment. in Catull.*

507. Ovid, *Amor.* Lib. I. el. 15, v. 14.

508. [Transcriber's note: Note missing in original.]

509. Müller, *Einleitung*, T. II. p. 261.

510. *Sylvæ*, Lib. III.

511. Facile intelligimus, mansisse vocem, mutata significatione et potestate vocis. Vavassor, *De Epigrammate*, c. 3.

512. *Tracts*, p. 13.

513. *Var. Lect.* Lib. III. c. 5.

514. *Brutus*, c. 78.

515. Cicero, *Orat. pro Sextio*, c. 51.

516. *De Ludicrâ Dictione*.

517. Gresset.

518. *Poetic.* Lib. VI. c. 7.

519. There is more tenderness and delicacy in a single love-verse of an old Troubadour, than in all the amatory compositions of the Greeks and Romans. What is there in Anacreon or Ovid, to compare to these verses of Thibault, King of Navarre?—

> "Las! Si j'avois pouvoir d'oublier,
> Sa beaulté—son bien dire,
> Et son très doulx regarder,
> Finirois non martyre.
>
> "Mais las! Comment oublier
> Sa beaulté, son bien dire,
> Et son très doulx regarder!
> Mieux aime mon martyre."

520. *Brutus*, c. 35.

521. "Hic illi, (Catulo) Deo pulchrior," says Cicero, "at erat, sicut hodie est, perversissimis oculis." Lib. I. c. 28.

522.

> "I stood, and to the Dawn my vows addressed,
> When Roscius rose refulgent in the west.
> Forgive, ye Powers! A mortal seemed more bright,
> Than the bright god who darts the shafts of light."

523. Sueton. *In Jul. Cæsare*, c. 49.

524. Ibid. c. 73.

525. Ovid. *Tristia*, Lib. II.

526. *Epist.* Lib. I. ep. 16.

527. *Epist.* Lib. IV. ep. 27.

528.

> "Why Phileros, a torch before me bear?—
> A heart on fire all other light may spare.
> *That* feeble flame can ill resist the power
> Of the keen tempest and the headlong shower;
> But *this* still glows whatever storms may drench,
> What Venus kindles, she alone can quench."

529.

> "Ye guardians of the tender flock, retire,
> Why seek ye flames, when man himself is fire?
> Whate'er I touch bursts forth in sudden blaze,
> And the woods kindle with my scorching gaze."

530. *Theorie*, Tom. I. *Comödie*.

531. "Non ignoro," says Salmasius, in his Notes to Vopiscus' Life of Aurelian, "quid distent Atellanæ et Mimi; recentiores, tamen, confudisse videntur." F. Vopiscus, *Vit. Aurel.* c. 42. ap. *Histor. August. Script.*

532. Cicero, *Epist. Familiar.* Lib. IX. ep. 16.

533. Flogel, *Geschichte der komisch. Litter.* T. IV. p. 101. Müller, *Einleitung*.

534. Donatus, *Præf. in Terent.*

535. Hoffmanni, *Lexicon, voce Mimus*. Ziegler, *De Mimis Romanorum*, p. 21, ed. Gotting. 1789.

536. Manilius, *De Astronomic.* Lib. V. v. 472.

537. Tytler's *Life of Crichton*, p. 45. 1st ed.

538. Festus in *Salva res est*.

539. *Satyricon*, c. 80. See also Suetonius, *Caligula*, c. 57.

540. "Mimi ergo est jam exitus," says Cicero, "non Fabulæ: In quo, cum clausula non invenitur, fugit aliquis e manibus; deinde scabella concrepant, aulæum tollitur."—*Orat. pro Cælio*, c. 27.

541. *Sat.* Lib. I. 2. v. 55.

542. Lib. II. c. 5.

543. *Tristia*, Lib. II. v. 497.

544. Athenæus, *Deipnos.* Lib. VI.

545. *Anastasius*, Vol. II. p. 385. 2d ed.

546. Macrobius, *Saturnalia*, Lib. II. c. 7.

547.

> "For threescore years since first I saw the light,
> I lived without reproach—A ROMAN KNIGHT.
> As such I left my sacred home; but soon
> Shall there return an actor and buffoon.
> Since stretch'd beyond the point where honour ends,
> One day too long my term of life extends.
> Fortune, extreme alike in good and ill,
> Since thus to blast my fame has been thy will;
> Why didst thou not, ere spent my youthful race,
> Bend me yet pliant to this dire disgrace?
> While power remain'd, with yet unbroken frame,
> HIM to have pleased, and earn'd the crowd's acclaim:
> But now why drive me to an actor's part,
> When nought remains of all the actor's art;
> Nor life, nor fire, which could the scene rejoice,
> Nor grace of form, nor harmony of voice?
> As fades the tree round which the ivy twines,
> So in the clasp of age my strength declines."

548. Macrobius, *Saturnalia*, Lib. II. c. 7.

549.

> "All are not always first—few have been known
> To rest long on the summit of renown.
> In fame we faster fall than we ascend:
> I fall—who follows, thus his course must end."

550. *Chron. Euseb. ad Olymp.* 184.

551. *Epist. Famil.* Lib. VII. ep. 11.

552.

> "Democritus, the philosophic sage
> Of Abdera, deep read in Nature's page,
> Opposed a brazen shield of polish bright
> To full-orbed Phœbus' mid-day shafts of light,
> That the round mirror, having catched the rays,
> Might blast his vision with the dazzling blaze;
> Thus his extinguished eyes could ne'er behold
> The wicked prosper. O that thus my gold
> Might, with the lustre of its yellow light,
> Dim through my closing years these orbs of sight,
> Whose darkness would not see a thriftless son
> Waste the fair fortune which his fathers won!"

553. *Noct. Attic.* Lib. XVI. c. 7.

554. *Satir.* Lib. I. 10.

555. Macrobius, *Saturnal.* Lib. II. c. 7.

556. Plin. *Hist. Nat.* Lib. VIII. c. 51.

557. Ep. viii.

558. Senec. *Epist.*

559. *De Mimis Romanorum*, p. 66.

560. *Noct. Attic.* Lib. XV. c. 25. Lib. X. c. 24.

561. Terent. Maurus, *De Metris*; Ziegler, *De Mim. Rom.* p. 66 and 67.

562.

> "Tis fit that we the means employ,
> To sweeten life, and life enjoy.
> Let pleasure lay your cares to rest,
> And clasp the fair one to your breast,
> Give and receive the melting kiss,
> Like doves in hours of amorous bliss."

563. *Satir.* Lib. I. 2.

564. Vopiscus. *Vit. Aurel.* c. 42.

565. Suetonius, *In Vespas.* c. 19.

566. Id. *In Nerone*, c. 29.

567. Appellatus est a Mimis quasi obstupratus.—Lampridius, *Vit. Commodi*. c. 3.

568. Jul. Capitolinus, *In Maximin.* c. 9.

569. Tertullian, *De Spectac.* c. 17.—Lactantius. *Div. Inst.* Lib. VI. c. 20.—Walker on the *Italian Drama*, p. 3.

570. Rasis capitibus. Vossius, *Institut. Poetic.* Lib. II. c. 32. § 4.

571. Diomed. *De Orat.* Lib. III.

572. Celsus, *De Re Rustica*, Lib. I. c. 8.

573. *De Oratore*, Lib. II. c. 61.

574. *Storia D'Ogni Poesia*, Tom. V. p. 220.

575. Riccoboni, *Hist. de Theatre Italien*. Tom. I. p. 21.

576. *Dissert. dell Academ. Etrusc.* Tom. III.

577. Livy, Lib. XL. c. 51. Theatrum et proscenium ad Apollinis ædem Jovis in Capitolio, columnasque circa poliendas albo locavit.

578. Livy, *Epitom.* Lib. XLVIII. Quum locatum a censoribus theatrum exstrueretur; P. C. Nasica auctore, tanquam inutile, et nociturum publicis moribus, ex senatusconsulto destructum est: populusque aliquandiu stans ludos spectavit.

579. Plin. *Hist. Nat.* Lib. XXXVI. c. 15.

580. *Ibid.*

581. Plin. *Hist. Nat.* Lib. XXXVI. c. 15.

582. Plutarch, *In Pompeio*.

583. Plin. *Hist. Nat.* Lib. XXXVI. c. 15.

584. Vitruvius, Lib. V. c. 6.

585. Alexander ab Alexandro, *Dies Geniales*, Lib. V. c. 16.

586. *Ibid.*

587. Alexander ab Alexandro, *Dies Geniales*, Lib. V. c. 16.

588. Schütz, *ad Fragment. Oper. Ciceronis*, Tom. XVI.

589. Wilkins' *Vitruvius*, Vol. II. p. 185.

590. *Ibid.* Lib. V. c. 8.

591. *Ibid.* Lib. V. c. 7.

592. Montfaucon, *L'Antiquité Devoilé*, Liv. II. c. 1.

593. Lib. V. c. 3.

594. Montfaucon, Liv. II. c. 3.

595. Montfaucon, Liv. II. c. 1.

596. Ibid. and Macrobius, *Saturnalia*, Lib. VI. c. 4.

597. Plin. *Hist. Nat.* Lib. XIX. c. 1.

598. Lucretius, Lib. IV.

599. *De Oratore*, Lib. I. c. 60.

600. Hawkins' *Inquiry into Greek and Latin Poetry*, § xiii.

601. Cicero, *Academica*, Lib. II. c. 7.—"Primo inflatu tibicinis, Antiopam esse aiunt, aut Andromacham."

602. *Poet.* Lib. I. c. 20.—See also Theophrastus ap. Bartholinus, *De Tibiis Veterum*, Lib. I. c. 4, and Plin. *Hist. Nat.* Lib. XVI. c. 36.

603. Hawkins' *Inquiry into Lat. Poet.* p. 184.

604. *Antiquitates Romanæ*.

605. Turnebus, *Advers.* Lib. XXVIII. c. 34.

606. Servius ap. Bartholin. *De Tibiis Veter.*

607. Hawkins' *Inquiry*, p. 187.

608. Horat. *Art. Poet.* v. 202.

609. v. 295. On the subject of the Hydraulicon, see Wernsdorff, *Poet. Lat. Min.* Tom. II. p. 394; and Busby's *History of Music*.

610. Vitruvius, Lib. V. c. 6. Montfaucon, Liv. II. c. 1.

611. Ibid.

612. Stephens, *De Theatris*.

613. Pet. Arbiter, *Satyric.* c. 80.

614. Æsopum, si paullum irrauserit, explodi. *De Oratore*, Lib. I. c. 60.

615. Noster Æsopus, jurare quum cœpisset, vox eum defecit in illo loco "Si sciens fallo." *Epist. Famil.* Lib. VII. ep. 1. Ed. Schütz.

616. Vidi in Æsopo familiari tuo, tantum ardorem vultuum atque motuum, ut eum vis quædam abstraxisse a sensu mentis videretur. c. 37

617. Cicero, *pro Archia*, c. 8. Valer. Maxim. Lib. VIII. c. 7

618. Cicero, *De Legibus*, Lib. I. c. 4.

619. Livy, Lib. VII. c. 2.

620. I at one time was inclined to think that the reciting actor was concealed behind the pulpitum, which was elevated on the stage about the height of a man, and hence that the spectators saw only the gesticulating actor. If this plan was actually adopted, the representation may have been conducted without any apparent incongruity or violation of the scenic illusion. In Lord Gardenstoun's "*Travelling Memorandums*," we have an account of a play which he saw acted at Paris, where, in order to elude a privilege, the actors who appeared on the stage did not speak one word. "Their lips," continued his lordship, "move, and they go on with corresponding action and attitudes. But every word of the play is uttered with surprising propriety and character by persons behind the scenes. The play was nearly over before this singularity was discovered to me and others of our party. The whole was so strangely managed, that we could have sworn the visible actors were also the speakers." (Vol. I. p. 24.) I have not, however, been able to discover any ancient authority, from which it can be inferred that the representation of a Roman play was conducted in this manner by the reciting actor being placed either behind the scenes or pulpitum; and all authorities concur as to this strange division of dramatic labour, at least in the monologues of tragedies.

621. Cicero, *Paradox.* III. c. 2.

622. *Epist.* 121.

623. *Inst. Orat.* Lib. XI. c. 3.

624. Athenæus, Lib. I. Dubos, *Reflexions sur la Poésie*, Lib. III. c. 14.

625. Cicero, *De Oratore*, Lib. I.

626. Quintil. *Instit. Orat.* Lib. II. c. 10.

627. *Mem. de l'Acad. des Inscriptions*, T. 21.

628. Bonarota, *Addit. ad Dempster. Etruria Regalis*, § 36.

629. *Dissert. dell' Acad. Etrusc.* T. III.

630. Virgil. *Georg.* Lib. II.

631. Berger, *Comment. de Personis*, Lib. II. sect. 9.

632. Au. Gellius, *Noct. Attic.* Lib. V. c. 7.

633. Lib. I. Fab. 7. "O quanta species, inquit," &c.

634. *De Oratore*, Lib. II. c. 47.

635. *Noct. Attic.* Lib. V. c. 7.

636. *Mem. de l'Academ. des Inscriptions*, &c. Tom. IV.

637. Athenæus, Lib. XIV. Pitiscus, Lexicon, voce *Persona*. Berger, *Comment. De Personis*, c. II. § 9.

638. *De Oratore*, Lib. III. c. 59. "Nostri illi senes personatum ne Roscium quidem magnopere laudabant." This passage, however, is of somewhat doubtful interpretation. It may mean that these old men, having been accustomed to the natural countenance, did not applaud even so great an actor as Roscius, because he was invariably masked: or it may signify, that they did not greatly admire him when masked, and only applauded him when he appeared in his natural aspect. As some authorities say that Roscius *invariably* used the mask, the former interpretation may, perhaps, appear the most probable.

639. *Institut. Orator.* Lib. XI. c. 3.

640. Lib. IV. c. 19.

641. *Onomasticon*, Lib. IV. c. 19. See also Scaliger, *Poet.* Lib. I. c. 14, 15, 16.

642. Quintil. *Instit. Orator.* Lib. XI. c. 3.

643. Ibid.

644. *Onomasticon*, Lib. IV. c. 18. See also Stephens, *De Theatris*.

Transcriber’s Note

The table of contents has been added in the electronic version. The index has been repeated from the second volume.

On page 49, the second footnote is referenced twice; on page 312, a footnote is missing.

The book has many inconsistencies in spelling, capitalization or punctuation, especially in the quotations from foreign languages, where sometimes diacritical signs are missing or wrong. They were not corrected or modernized, except in the following places which can be regarded as printing errors.

page vi, “it” changed to “its”
page xiii, “Abregee” changed to “Abregée”
page 21, “antient” changed to “ancient”
page 24, “harkened” changed to “hearkened”
page 27, “agrandizement” changed to “aggrandizement”
page 28, “Estruscans” changed to “Etruscans”
page 29, “Guarnicci” changed to “Guarnacci”
page 30, “vitious” changed to “vicious”
page 32, “Schutz” changed to “Schütz”
page 33, comma added following “Ginguené”
page 37, “licenta” changed to “licentia”
page 45, “feodera” changed to “fœdera”
page 46, “the the” changed to “the”
page 46, “Gnavoid” changed to “Gnaivod”
page 47, “Estruscan” changed to “Etruscan”
page 48, “dipthong” changed to “diphthong”

page 54, period added following “dell”
page 55, italics removed from “Cicero”
page 55, “coeptum” changed to “cœptum”
page 57, “where” changed to “were”
page 60, “democrary” changed to “democracy”
page 61, “Cyrian” changed to “Cyprian”
page 64, “questor” changed to “quæstor”
page 65, “Muller” changed to “Müller”
page 65, “furtur” changed to “fertur”
page 66, “stongly” changed to “strongly”
page 68, “translaed” changed to “translated”
page 70, “Schonen” changed to “Schönen” and “Romern” to “Römern”
page 71, “corse” changed to “corpse”
page 72, “Hiedelberg” changed to “Heidelberg”
page 87, “Gelius” changed to “Gellius”
page 87, “Attacinus” changed to “Atacinus”
page 88, quote added before “Even”
page 90, quote added following “Glaucum,”
page 91, “.” changed to “,” following “Ennius”
page 96, “conprehends” changed to “comprehends”
page 101, “and and” changed to “and”
page 153, “picturesqe” changed to “picturesque”
page 154, “Lucretio.” changed to “Lucretio,”
page 169, quote added following “nituerunt.”
page 170, “coetûs” changed to “cœtûs”
page 180, “enuuch” changed to “eunuch”
page 190, “Schmeider” changed to “Schmieder”
page 185, single quote changed to double quote added following “discours,”
page 201, 319, 333 and 351, “appropiate” changed to “appropriate”
page 212, “Schönem” changed to “Schönen”
page 216, quote added following “again.”
page 216, “oderunt dum metuunt” changed to “oderint dum metuant”
page 227, quote added before “Attonitusque”
page 228, double “and” removed before “epithets”
page 231, period added following “c”
page 231, “Kunste” changed to “Künste”

page 236, quote added following “piabant;”
page 249, “Praef.” changed to “Præf.”
page 257, “Cynogeticon” changed to “Cynegeticon”
page 261, “Hine” changed to “Hinc”
page 263, quote added following “cubandum est.”
page 273, “16.” changed to “10.”
page 278, “eumdem” changed to “eundem”
page 290, “teritories” changed to “territories”
page 291, “vestages” changed to “vestiges”
page 295, “powful” changed to “powerful”
page 305, quote removed following “libido est,”
page 312, “verti” changed to “vertice”
page 342, “woof” changed to “wool”
page 344, “entremely” changed to “extremely”

Some variant spellings were not changed (e. g. “truly” and “truely”, “obscænus” and “obscœnus”, “groundwork” and “ground-work”, “tombstone” and “tomb-stone”).

paragraph 1.E below.

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